This is a reproduction of a library book that was digitized by Google as part of an ongoing effort to preserve the information in books and make it universally accessible.

Google™ books

https://books.google.com

NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES
3 3433 11480 3152

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Webster

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

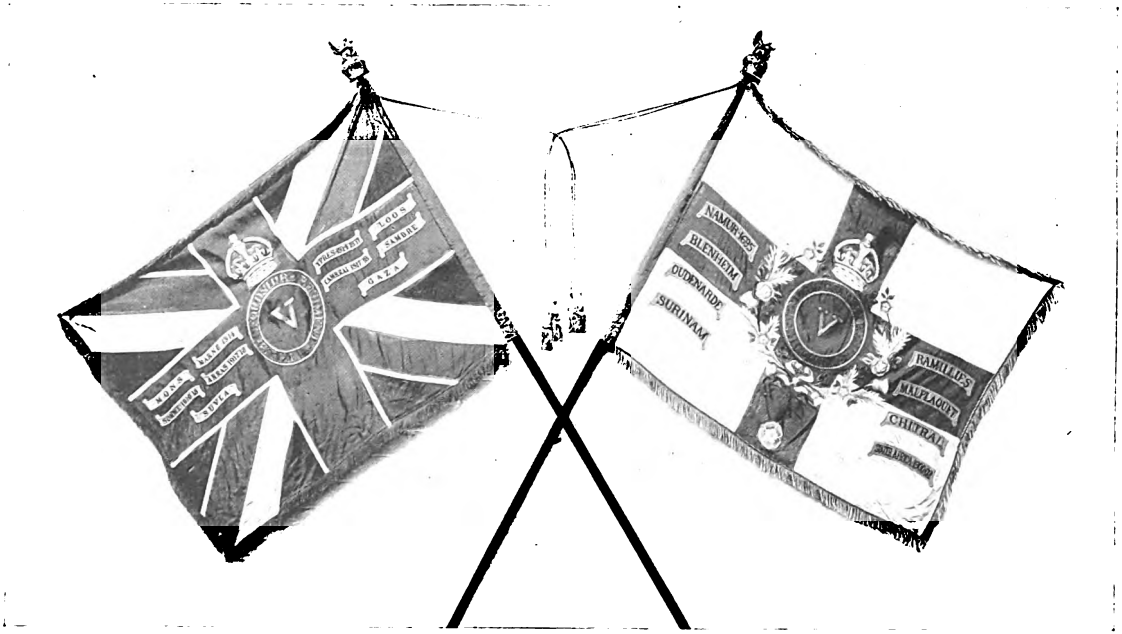
THE HISTORY OF THE FIFTH BATTALION THE BEDFORDSHIRE AND HERTFORDSHIRE REGIMENT (T.A.)

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

Digitized by Google



Frontispiece. KING'S AND REGIMENTAL COLOURS, 5TH BATTALION BEDFORDSHIRE AND HERTFORDSHIRE REGIMENT.

Digitized by Google

THE

HISTORY

OF THE

FIFTH BATTALION THE BEDFORDSHIRE AND HERTFORDSHIRE REGIMENT (T.A.)

BY

CAPTAIN F. A. M. WEBSTER

FOREWORD BY

FIELD-MARSHAL THE VISCOUNT ALLENBY,
G.C.B., G.C.M.G., D.C.L., LL.D.

NEW YORK

FREDERICK WARNE & CO., LTD.
LONDON & NEW YORK

Digitized by Google

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
515934 A
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R 1931 L

COPYRIGHT
1930

Printed in Great Britain

Digitized by Google

DEDICATION

To all those our comrades who, at the call of duty, and without thought of self, went cheerfully forth and laid down their lives for King and Country, this book is dedicated.

SAS 1939

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

FOREWORD

COLONEL MISKIN has honoured me by a request that I should write a Foreword to "The History of the 5th Battalion of the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment," an honour which I am proud to accept.

The Battalion had its origin in a single Company of Rifle Volunteers formed in Bedford in the year 1860. In 1881 it became the 3rd (V. B.) Bedfordshire Regiment. During 1900–1901 the Battalion sent big drafts to the Line Battalion in South Africa. In 1908 the title of the Unit was altered, and it became the 5th Battalion of the Bedfordshire Regiment (T.F.).

In July, 1915, the 5th Battalion went across the seas with the 162nd Brigade of the 54th Division. It landed at Suvla Bay in August, and within a week was involved in the hard fighting which ended in the capture of Kidney Hill.

In this engagement the 5th Bedfords gained their nickname—"The Yellow Devils."

They stayed in Gallipoli until the Peninsula was evacuated; suffering grievously from disease and wounds; casualties from dysentery being especially heavy.

In December, 1915, they arrived in Egypt, where they took part in many engagements on the Canal and in the Eastern Desert.

Digitized by Google

I made the acquaintance of the Battalion in the summer of 1917, on taking over command of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force. It had earlier fought in the first and second battles of Gaza; and now lay in trenches before that stronghold of the Turks.

At the end of October came the assault which broke the enemy's position on the Gaza-Beersheba Front, and the 5th Bedfords distinguished themselves by several daring and successful attacks in the coastal zone.

During the subsequent operations, they took their full share of the marching and fighting which brought about the defeat of the Turkish Armies.

The close of the year found them busily occupied north of Jaffa; the Spring of 1918 was also marked by much active work, and in September they joined in the final advance and the crowning victory of Megiddo.

Beirut was reached on the 31st October, the day of Armistice.

The adventure was at an end; the great and glorious adventure in which the 5th Bedfords had taken a part of which they, their children and their children's children may be for ever proud.

ALLENBY, *F.M.*

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS

Page

FOREWORD BY FIELD-MARSHAL THE VISCOUNT ALLENBY, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., D.C.L., LL.D. vii

CHAPTER

1. ORIGIN OF VOLUNTEER SERVICE . . . 1
The Beginning of the Battalion—1st Administrative Battalion Bedfordshire Volunteer Rifles—3rd V. B. Bedfordshire Regiment.

2. THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR PERIOD . . . 24
Institution of the Territorial Force—5th Bn. The Bedfordshire Regiment.

3. THE OUTBREAK OF THE GREAT WAR . . 44
Mobilisation and Training—England 1914–15.

4. 2/5TH AND 3/5TH BATTALIONS . . . 68
Formation and History of the 2/5th and 3/5th Battalions.

5. FOREIGN SERVICE—1915 80
Embarkation — The "Braemar Castle" — Gallipoli.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER Page

6. "What We Take We Hold!" . . . 90
Suvla Bay Landing — Kidney Hill — First Casualties—The Yellow Devils.

7. Anzac and After 110
Trench Warfare—Dysentery—The Evacuation of Gallipoli.

8. Egypt—1916 121
The Suez Canal Defences—With the Desert Columns—Christmas Sports.

9. Palestine—1917 141
Sinai Desert—The Promised Land in Sight—First Battle of Gaza.

10. The Second Battle of Gaza . . . 157

11. Umbrella Hill 164

12. The Third Battle of Gaza 184

13. Into the Holy Land 209
Zeify Hill—Yaffa Hill—The Fall of Jerusalem.

14. The Coastal Plain of Palestine . . 222
The Fall of Jericho—The Bureid Ridge Raid.

15. The Last Great Push 235
Mejdel Yaba—Syria—The Armistice at Beirut.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER Page

16. THE POST-WAR PERIOD 249

THE 5TH BN. THE BEDFORDSHIRE AND HERTFORDSHIRE REGIMENT.

Post-War Reorganisation—The Defence Force—The Company Flags—Army Manœuvres, 1925—Guard of Honour to H.R.H. The Prince of Wales.

APPENDICES 273

GENERAL INDEX 299

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Frontispiece. KING'S AND REGIMENTAL COLOURS, 5TH BN. BEDFORDSHIRE AND HERTFORDSHIRE REGIMENT.

PLATE		Facing Page
I	1ST ADMINISTRATIVE BATTALION BEDFORDSHIRE R.V.C.	3
II	THE EASTER MONDAY VOLUNTEER REVIEW AT DUNSTABLE, 1877	18
III	COMMANDING OFFICERS, 1860–1912 . .	23
IV	SOUTH AFRICAN WAR PERIOD . . .	30
V	OFFICERS 3RD V. B. BEDFORDSHIRE REGT., SHORNCLIFFE CAMP, 1904 . . .	39
VI	PRESENTATION OF KING'S AND REGIMENTAL COLOURS, BEDFORD PARK, 20TH JUNE, 1912	46
VII	COMMANDING OFFICERS, 1912–1928 . .	51
VIII	GREAT WAR PERIOD: OFFICERS 5TH BN. BEDFORDSHIRE REGIMENT (T.F.), 1915	66

Digitized by Google

PLATE		Facing Page
IX	Great War Period: Warrant Officers and N.C.O.'s., 5th Bn. Bedfordshire Regiment (T.F.), St. Albans, 1915	71
X	3/5th Bn. Bedfordshire Regt., 1917	78
XI	Gallipoli, 1915	99
XII	Egypt, 1916: On Desert Column	114
XIII	Palestine, 1917: Second Battle of Gaza	147
XIV	Palestine, 1917: Air Photograph of Umbrella Hill	162
XV	Palestine, 1917: Operation Map, Umbrella Hill Raid.	179
XVI	Palestine, 1917: Third Battle of Gaza	186
XVII	Palestine, 1917: Third Battle of Gaza	194
XVIII	Palestine, 1917: Third Battle of Gaza	202
XIX	Luton, 1926: H.R.H. The Prince of Wales Inspecting Guard of Honour	243
XX	Inspection 162nd Infantry Brigade, Colchester, 1928	258
XXI	Officers 5th Bn. Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regt. (T.A.), Arundel Park Camp, 1929	263
XXII	Sergeants' Mess, 5th Bn. Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regt. (T.A.), 1929	270

Digitized by Google

The History of the Fifth Battalion The Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment

CHAPTER ONE

Origin of Volunteer Service

The Beginning of the Battalion—1st Administrative Battalion Bedfordshire Volunteer Rifles—3rd V.B. Bedfordshire Regiment

It is a far cry from the tale of the devoted service of the Territorial Force during the Great War to the days when the 5th Battalion The Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment and other similar units had their first beginnings.

From earliest times the rural areas have played an important part in England's scheme of voluntary military service and, always, the duty of raising troops has fallen upon the Lord Lieutenant, or High Sheriff, of the County.

The Regular Army, the old-time Militia and Volunteers and, later, the Special Reserve and the Territorial Force have all represented special developments of the *fyrds* of Anglo-Saxon times, when every able-bodied freeman, between the ages of fifteen and sixty, was under obligation to go forth to the host for service in the field.

The Volunteers were the forefathers of the Territorial Force, which rendered such splendid service in the Great War.

Digitized by Google

With and without Acts of Parliament Volunteer Corps have been raised at different times and for various purposes. In 1794 an Act was passed which provided that " any corps of volunteers which had been raised by officers commissioned by the King, or the Lieutenant of the County, or by any other person authorised by the King, and which in case of invasion or riot should assemble and march, should receive the same pay as the regular forces, and be subject to military discipline."

In those days Great Britain had 340,000 volunteer riflemen, most of whom were disbanded after the signing of the Peace of Amiens in 1802.

Two years later England was threatened with a Napoleonic invasion and 380,000 volunteers quickly armed and organised themselves. At that time the Act of Parliament was passed by which the Yeomanry and Volunteers were to be administered for upwards of a hundred years.

That Bedfordshire played its part in raising a Volunteer Corps, to be prepared to meet the French, is quite certain.

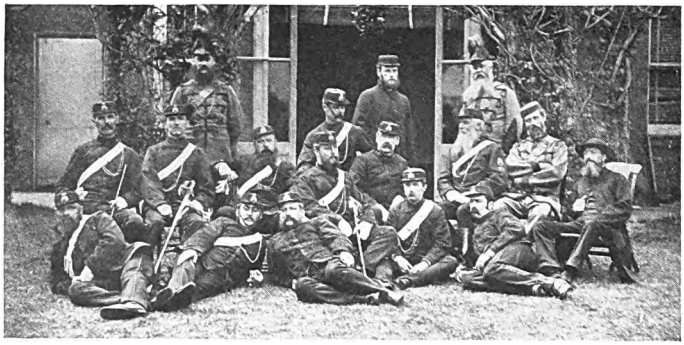
The Army List of 1807 gives the following details of the 2nd Battalion Bedfordshire Volunteers:

Commanding Officer: Lieut.-Col. Samuel Whitbread
Major W. Lee Antonie
Capt. R. Lee
„ T. Cockman
„ F. Green
„ Theed Pearse
„ C. Short
Lieut. John Green
„ Wm. Stapleton
„ John Pulley
„ Thos. Kidman
Ensign Wm. Smith
„ John Cooke
„ Wm. Whitworth
„ Thos. Liburne
„ Geo. Short
„ John Day
„ Geo. Street
Adjutant Charles Bailey

Digitized by Google

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R
L

Digitized by Google



1

2

3

PL. I.] [*B* 3

1ST ADMINISTRATIVE BATTALION, BEDFORDSHIRE R. V. C.

1. An Early Group of Officers. 2. Clr.-Sergt. John Bull (Bedford).
3. Capt. Wm. Phillips (Luton).

Digitized by Google

The Colours of this Battalion now hang in the Shire Hall at Bedford, and some evidence of its activities may be found in an account rendered on 11th May 1808 to the Quarter Sessions by one Captain Oliver, as follows:

To breakfasts for seventy Privates belonging to the Dunstable and Houghton Volunteer Companies (beer included) ...	£3	10	0
To dinner for same number (beer included)	7	0	0
Paid to Mr. Thomas Squire for flints ...		5	6
Pay to seventy Privates at 1s. each ...	3	10	0

There is no record of who Captain Oliver was, or of why, when or where the Dunstable and Houghton Volunteer Companies "assembled and marched," and so earned their day's pay.

The next authentic record of the progress of the Volunteer movement in Bedfordshire is not found until another half-century had elapsed. This circumstance is probably explained by the fact that after the general peace of 1814 the infantry battalions of volunteers ceased almost entirely to exist. By the middle of the nineteenth century volunteer soldiers were again urgently needed.

At home the Militia had fallen from a strength of 215,000 in 1812, to a mere 36,000 by 1858 and the Volunteers were no longer extant. The threat of further war with France was a real one and Lord Palmerston encouraged the revival of Rifle Volunteers and, on 12th May 1859 the War Office issued its famous circular letter to Lords Lieutenant authorising the formation of Volunteer Rifle Corps.

It would appear that at first the new Volunteer movement was not regarded with any particular degree of favour in Bedfordshire.

This is, in part, accounted for perhaps by the tales told of the excessive marching and counter-marching of troops within the county in the middle of the eighteenth century when the Young Pretender marched his Highlanders as far south as Derby, and Northampton lay on his direct line of march to London. It is more probable, however,

Digitized by Google

that the very strong opinions pronounced by Earl de Grey, at that time Lord Lieutenant of Bedfordshire, carried considerable weight. Despite the fact that the Earl had for over forty years commanded the Yorkshire Hussars Yeomanry, he wrote some notes of scathing criticism concerning the Volunteer movement.

His main objections were that the Volunteers were to be Riflemen first, whereas he would have preferred that they should be manœuvreable soldiers, since every village could find a place for drill, but not one in a hundred could offer facilities for rifle practice. " They (the Volunteers) will form very pleasant, agreeable meetings for a certain class," runs the letter in the Earl's own handwriting, now preserved in the Muniment Room at the Shire Hall, Bedford, " they will give opportunity for a good many spirited matches and wagers—like pigeon shooting at the Red Hound Battery—in populous districts, or in towns they will have the additional agreement of a neat brass band, women looking out of windows at the aspiring heroes; many hearty cheers after one afternoon's refreshment to the health of the successful champion of the day."

Given such circumstances Earl de Grey thought the Volunteer movement might survive for a time, but he saw no hopes of bringing it to a successful issue in a flat country, such as Bedfordshire, where men would have to walk miles to drill and spend hours in mastering the management of a new weapon.

Whatever may have been the feeling throughout the county, however, there were certain people in the town of Bedford, headed by the somewhat fiery mayor, Mr. John Howard, who were all in favour of learning to defend their hearths and homes.

On Wednesday, 1st June 1859 the Mayor convened a public meeting in the Shire Hall to consider the formation of a Volunteer Rifle Corps.

In the course of an impassioned speech Mr. Howard told his audience how, being too young for real Volunteer service in 1804 he had commanded a company of boy

Digitized by Google

soldiers who wore wooden swords at their sides and went through their drill exercises regularly. He further related the story of how a Frenchman being shown the little red dot which represents Great Britain on the map of the world, had said that he could easily kick over so small an affair. Illustrating the word with action, the fiery Mayor let fly with his foot and lifting the table clean off its legs dropped it upon the heads of a band of unfortunate newspaper reporters whose faces, clothes and notebooks emerged from the wreck of the table completely smothered with ink, amidst roars of laughter from the company.

The Mayor, having apologised, proceeded to explain the purpose of the Volunteer movement.

Mr. T. J. Green then proposed the first resolution—"That it is highly desirable at the present crisis to organise a Volunteer Rifle Corps for Bedford and its vicinity, under the direction of the Lord Lieutenant of the County and that a list be forthwith opened for the enrolment of Volunteers." This resolution was seconded by Mr. W. J. Nash and carried unanimously.

The fact that the Volunteers had to pay for their uniforms, buy their rifles and subscribe to the funds of their corps, and the club room, if there was one, made necessary the second resolution which was proposed by the Rev. R. W. Fitzpatrick—"That in order to enable suitable persons to join, who were not in a condition to provide their equipment, a subscription be opened, to which all those who themselves are unable to join the corps be earnestly requested to contribute." This was seconded by Alderman Hurst and carried. A Committee was then formed and finally Dr. Barker moved, and Mr. J. Sergeant seconded, "That a petition be drawn up and sent to the House of Commons urging the Government to equip and arm the Volunteers at the public expense."

Unfortunately, an election in Bedford coincided with the initial meeting to form the Volunteers. This seems to have given just the opportunity that was needed by a certain section of people who were utterly opposed to the movement.

Digitized by Google

There is a leading article in the *Bedfordshire Times* on 25th June 1859 under the heading "Is the Rifle Corps Desirable?" In this article the Editor deals with the ridicule poured upon the Volunteer movement by some "advanced minds" in Bedford and concludes: "Let Rifle Corps and Clubs be thoroughly organised throughout the country and we are safe. We say then to the young men of Bedford and Bedfordshire, get rifles and learn how to use them, and you will not only keep off invasion but stifle insolence which diplomacy fails to do."

Despite the Mayor's endeavours and the exhortations of the local press the matter remained, virtually, in abeyance until a second public meeting was held towards the end of the year.

On 21st November 1859 Earl de Grey died suddenly. His nephew, the Earl of Ripon, succeeded to the Earldom of de Grey and the Barony of Grantham and the Duke of Bedford became Lord Lieutenant of the County.

This particular month is of importance in Volunteer history, for on Friday, 25th November, a second meeting of townsmen was held in the Working Men's Institute, Bedford, under the chairmanship of Mr. T. J. Green, who dealt briefly with the purposes of the movement, which, he said, had already been placed fully before the people of Bedford at the previous meeting in June. Alderman Hurst formally proposed that the Rifle Corps be forthwith formed. This was seconded by Alderman Nash and carried unanimously. Mr. T. J. Green was elected Civil President of the Volunteer Rifle Corps, the strength of which was fixed at fifty to begin with, and twenty-six Volunteers were then enrolled, but not attested. Messrs. T. Turnley and T. W. Pearse were elected Honorary Secretaries, and a subscription list was opened, the first subscribers being the Rev. W. Fitzpatrick £15, the Rev. F. Fanshawe, T. Turnley, James Howard £10 each, and Mr. Denne £5.

By the beginning of December the Bedford Corps had enrolled its full quota of fifty and drill had commenced,

Digitized by Google

while a Leighton Buzzard Corps was formed on 2nd December with Colonel Hanmer as President, H. J. Jones as Treasurer, and Mark Whyley, father of the present Coroner, as Secretary. On 14th December the Clerk to the Lieutenancy addressed a letter to the Secretary of State for War asking for copies of all instructions issued in relation to the Volunteers, for the use of the Duke of Bedford, K.G., successor to the late Lord Lieutenant, Earl de Grey, who had retained all papers previously sent. At the same time the questions of uniform for the Bedford Volunteers and of a rifle range for the Corps at Leighton Buzzard were matters being considered by the Lord Lieutenant, who had already laid down that the uniform of all Volunteer Rifle Corps throughout the county should be the same.

Early in January 1860 Mr. T. J. Green forwarded a list of the effectives enrolled, together with a copy of the proposed rules for the Bedford Company and suggested pattern of their uniform, to the Clerk to the Lieutenancy. It seems that the uniform suggested was a dark shade of grey without facings, but with cord at the edges, as cord was less expensive than braid. It was not proposed to go to the expense of shakos with plumes, as forage caps were considered good enough. At the same time the Clerk to the Lieutenancy was in communication with Mr. H. W. Beauford, Secretary of the Bedfordshire Rifle Volunteers, and on the 11th of the month the Lord Lieutenant wrote to the Secretary of State for War, recommending the acceptance of the offer of the Bedford Corps and asking that an officer might be sent to inspect the site of a proposed rifle range at the foot of Masberry Hill near Putnoe Wood and about half a mile from the town of Bedford.

It was during January, also, that Major Cooper Cooper, of Toddington Park, formed the Toddington Company and a meeting was held at Biggleswade, at which Sir George Osborn, Bart., of Chicksand Priory, and Mr. Francis John Thynne, Haynes Park, Bedford, of the family of Thynnes,

Digitized by Google

I fancy, who are at present located in Wiltshire and of whom Oliver Thynne is a subaltern in the Royal Wiltshire (Prince of Wales Own Royal Regiment) Yeomanry, were present.

In the meantime the new Earl de Grey and Ripon had been appointed to take charge of the department at the War Office dealing with Volunteer affairs and on 11th February he informed the Lord Lieutenant that the rules for the Bedford Corps could not be approved until a Bedfordshire Battalion had been actually formed and a Commanding Officer appointed. The Secretary of State for War was, however, prepared to recommend the approval of rules " For the government of the Company now in question upon appointment of the Captain." It was stated, further, that there would be no objection " To the Company incorporating in such rules special provision having reference to its ultimately forming part of a Battalion."

The position being thus made clear the Lord Lieutenant at once appointed the officers of the No. 1 (Bedford) Corps, and commissions dated 27th February 1860 were issued to Captain William Crosbie, who had served in that rank in the 60th Rifles (King's Royal Rifles), Lieut. Thomas Jobson Jackson, and Ensign James Howard.

It is interesting to note that Mr. Henry Adkin, of the firm of gunsmiths still carrying on business in the High Street, Bedford, one of the Volunteers, was appointed as " The competent person to take charge of the arms."

Enrolment took place under the old Statute (44 Geo. III).

The actual swearing-in of the rank and file of the No. 1 Bedford Company took place on 19th March 1860, and the attestation of the Bedford Rifle Volunteers up to as late as 1874 included a promise to maintain, support and defend the Succession of the Crown as " limited to the Princess Sophia, Electress of Hanover, and the heirs of her body being Protestants, hereby utterly renouncing and abjuring any obedience or allegiance unto any other person claiming or pretending a right to the Crown of this realm."

Digitized by Google

Then it goes on, "I do declare that no foreign prince, person, prelate, state, or potentate hath or ought to have any jurisdiction, power, superiority, pre-eminence or authority, ecclesiastical or spiritual, within this realm."

The list of the first recruits is very interesting to old townspeople of Bedford, because it includes so many well-remembered people who were prominent in a past generation.

NOMINAL ROLL OF THOSE SWORN AT THE FIRST ATTESTATION ON 19TH MARCH 1860 AT BEDFORD

WM. CROSBIE	JAS. FISHER
G. F. D. EVANS, M.D.	JOYNN HAYNES
THOS. J. JACKSON	GEORGE BROOK PRICE
JAS. HOWARD	HARRY ADKIN
CHAS. BERRITSON	JOHN DAY
THOS. WRIGLEY WILEY	WM. TEBBS
WM. J. MONK	J. A. MILLER
WM. NASH	R. R. HAWKINS
WM. S. SANDON	S. CARTER, Junr.
WM. GEORGE LOVELL	GEORGE ROBINSON
R. FORD	ED. S. BARRY
H. JAS. PORTER	FREDK. W. REDDEN
W. BETTISON	A. COOKSON
WM. MEALEY	MARK SHARMAN
R. BARRY STAFFORD	GEORGE MAYES
F. YOUNG	JOHN HINTON
J. M. CUTHBERT	ALEX GRANT
HENRY H. GREEN	GEORGE BOXALL
CHAS. J. REDDEN	WM. J. PORTER

These were the men who actually founded the unit which is now the 5th Bn. The Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regt. Wm. Crosbie was the Captain, Dr. Evans was the Hon. Assistant Surgeon, Thomas Jackson the Lieutenant, and Jas. Howard the Ensign.

According to the archives in the Muniment Room at the Shire Hall it appears that Luton took steps to raise their own Corps without first consulting the Clerk to the Lieutenancy. This led to trouble, and, as the outcome, Mr. John Sambrook Crawley, grandfather of Mrs. Crawley Ross Skinner, the present owner of Stockwood Park,

Digitized by Google

Luton, forwarded to the proper authority, a list of volunteers willing to be enrolled. On the 30th May in that year the Rev. F. W. Adey attended at the Court House and administered the oath to forty-six volunteers. Among those attested were J. S. Crawley (Captain), Edmund Waller Vyse (Lieutenant), and Thomas Smith (Ensign).

In the meantime Toddington had formed a Corps of sixty-four persons under the command of Major Wm. Cooper Cooper, formerly of the Bedfordshire Militia. A three hundred yards rifle range had been found and an agreement reached whereby the arms of the company should be deposited in a room over the vestry, in charge of Edward Willis, of Toddington, who had " served five years in the Bedfordshire Militia with a good character."

Meanwhile the War Office had accepted the services of the Bedford Corps as from the 10th February, which is, therefore, the date of foundation of the 5th Bn. Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regt.; but at that time the Bedford Corps held eightieth place on the roster of Rifle Corps in the country.

Leighton Buzzard, Dunstable and Eaton Socon all came forward with offers of service.

Shortly after this there seems to have been considerable discontent among the officers, who were afraid they would not get their commissions in time to attend the Special Court, at which Queen Victoria had promised to receive them, on 7th May 1860, and among certain sections of the men because, although No. 1 Corps was established at Bedford, and No. 2 at Toddington, an unfavourable report had been made upon the proposed rifle range at Leighton Buzzard and considerations of ranges and suitable storage for rifles were holding matters up at Eaton Socon and Dunstable.

The first difficulty was overcome by Mr. John Green, Clerk to the Lieutenancy, who by dint of great perseverance secured the appointments of Lieut. Jackson, Ensign Howard and Hon. Assistant Surgeon Evans, in time for them to be presented at the Special Court by the Secretary

Digitized by Google

of State for War, in the absence of the Duke of Bedford, the Lord Lieutenant, who was indisposed.

Among the officers of the Toddington Corps who received their commissions a few days later was Lieut. John Thomas Green, son of the Clerk to the Lieutenancy, who was to rise, subsequently, to the command of the Regiment and also to succeed his father as Clerk to the Lieutenancy.

April saw officers posted to No. 4 Corps at Dunstable and No. 5 Corps at Ampthill and Silsoe. The Hon. Assistant Surgeon to the Dunstable Corps was Fredk. Farr, of a family who, I believe, still farm land in the Dunstable district. No. 5 Corps was commanded by Captain John Hatfield Brooks, of Flitwick Manor, who had seen service as a Major in the Bengal Cavalry. Francis John Thynne was his subaltern. The No. 6 Luton Corps was accepted at the end of April, and the officers posted and the men attested during May. This left No. 3 Corps still vacant, as, although Leighton Buzzard had made offers of a fresh site for a rifle range in the township of Heath, this position did not meet with Government approval.

Meanwhile, everything was moving towards the formation of an Administrative Battalion in the county. As early as 12th April Sir George Osborn, Bart., of Chicksand Priory, Chairman of the Biggleswade Volunteer Committee, was urging the Duke of Bedford to recommend the appointment as Major-Commandant of the Bedfordshire Rifle Volunteers of His Grace's nephew, the Hon. Hastings Russell, M.P., afterwards the Ninth Duke of Bedford, who died in 1891. The Duke, however, did not consider the time was yet ripe for the appointment of a Commanding Officer. He was anxious for the various corps to be formed into an Administrative Battalion, but for this also the time was not yet propitious. It seems, in fact, that the activities of the Bedfordshire Volunteers were at that time purely local, since the county was unrepresented at the Great Review of 25,000 Volunteers who marched past the Queen in Hyde Park on 23rd June. A day prior to that review,

Digitized by Google

however, a general fête was held in the grounds of Toddington Manor, the residence of Mr. W. D. Cooper Cooper, and Miss Cooper Cooper presented a bugle to the Toddington Rifles. On that occasion the ground was kept by the Bedford Corps under Captain Crosbie.

At this time it would have been possible to form an Administrative Battalion, had the neighbourhoods of the gentlemen who comprised the County Volunteer Committee raised the proper numbers of men; for example, Biggleswade had a waiting list of forty-three men who only lacked a lead to enrol.

The Strength Returns rendered to the Clerk to the Lieutenancy at the end of June 1860 showed the following position :—

RETURN OF STRENGTH, END OF JUNE 1860.

Company	*Effective Officers*	*No. of Men*	*Total*
1. (Bedford)	3	57	60
2. (Toddington) ...	3	55	58
3. —	—	—	—
4. (Dunstable)	3	58–61	61 or 64
5. (Ampthill)	3	58	61
6. (Luton)	3	53	56
	15	281 or 284	296 or 299

This return prevented an application being made for the appointment of a Major-Commandant, as there were not four Companies of a minimum strength of sixty in each, nor three hundred effectives in all.

The matter of the appointment of a Major-Commandant seems to have aroused a sudden furious storm in Bedfordshire Volunteer circles, but the position was not clear as to what strength was required before the county could form an Administrative Battalion and be entitled to a Major and an Adjutant.

Digitized by Google

On 4th July 1860 the Clerk to the Lieutenancy went to the War Office and saw Mr. White, of the Volunteer Department. After that interview he saw Mr. Hastings Russell and on 7th July the Duke addressed a letter to the Secretary of State for War setting out the strength of the Bedfordshire Volunteer Corps and stating that the appointment of a Major-Commandant would facilitate both recruiting and efficiency. Following upon this, the Hon. Hastings Russell, M.P., was appointed Major-Commandant, his commission dating from 21st August to coincide with the linking up of Nos. 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6 Companies as the 1st Administrative Battalion of the County of Bedford.

The appointment of the Commanding Officer and the formation of a County Battalion had the desired effect.

In Biggleswade Lieut.-Colonel Robert Henry Lindsell, a regular army officer who had recently relinquished the command of the 28th Foot (now the Gloucestershire Regiment), raised No. 7 Company and was granted a Volunteer Captain's Commission. The officers appointed to serve under him were Lieut. Fredk. Hogge, of Biggleswade, and Ensign Fredk. Gresham, of Chicksands, Shefford. In that same September 1860 John Thomas Green was promoted to the command of the No. 8 Woburn Company, which had just been formed, and his brother, Fredk. Wm. Green, went with him as Lieutenant, while Henry Russell, son of the Commanding Officer, was granted an Ensign's commission.

By the beginning of October the full quota of five hundred all ranks had been found and all the necessary companies formed, except No. 3 at Leighton Buzzard. Major Russell was then promoted to the rank of Lieut.-Colonel, the date of his gazette being 11th October 1860, and Nos. 7 and 8 Companies were incorporated to bring the 1st Administrative Battalion up to full strength. The establishment of officers was now complete, except that neither a Major Second-in-Command nor an Adjutant had been appointed. No immediate steps appear to have been taken in the matter of a Second-in-Command, but on 14th November

Digitized by Google

the Lord Lieutenant recommended the appointment as Adjutant of Francis Frederick Richard Mansell Morgan, of Pangbourne, near Reading, who had served as a Captain in the Bedfordshire Militia when embodied. This matter, however, hung fire, and it was not until 25th March 1861 that the Captain's Commission in the Volunteers was granted by the Duke, following upon the Queen's Commission as Adjutant, dated 2nd February 1861, having been issued.

At that period the pay of an adjutant was 8*s*. a day, with 2*s*. allowance for horse forage or travelling expenses if exempted by his Commanding Officer from keeping a horse. The qualifications required of an officer applying for the appointment of Adjutant were four years' service in the Line, or Army of the late East India Company, Indian Army or embodied Militia ; a testimonial from his former Commanding Officer ; and a declaration by himself that he had not attempted to obtain his appointment by means of bribery.

The officer so appointed was allowed to retain such rank as he had held previously and his appointment was subject to an examination at the nearest garrison town as to his fitness to fulfil the duties of an Adjutant.

It is interesting to note that the Commission, now preserved in the Muniment Room at the Shire Hall, Bedford, includes the phrase " You are not to take rank in the Army, excepting during the time of the said Battalion or Corps being called out into actual service, and you are not to be entitled by virtue of your superior rank to take the command of any company of Volunteers, an officer of the Company being present, except for the purpose of Instruction Drill."

Just prior to the appointment of the Adjutant the unfortunate matter of No. 3 Corps was finally settled by the members of the Leighton Buzzard Sub-Division, who had failed, by purchase or otherwise, to procure a suitable rifle range, asking permission to withdraw their offer of service.

Digitized by Google

Another important matter was settled in March, with the fixing of Battalion Headquarters at Bedford.

The Roll of Commissioned Officers of the Battalion in 1860 is preserved in the Muniment Room at the Shire Hall, Bedford, and is as set out hereunder :—

BEDFORDSHIRE RIFLE VOLUNTEER CORPS.

Roll of Commissioned Officers with dates of Commissions and Addresses.

COMMANDING OFFICER.

Francis Charles Hastings Russell, Esq., M.P., appointed Major of the 1st Battalion by Commission dated 21st August 1860. Promoted Lieut.-Colonel 11th October 1860. Resigned 9th January 1872.

1ST COMPANY, BEDFORD.

Rank	Name	Date of Commission	Address
Captain	William Crosbie, late Captain, 60th Rifles	1860 27 Feb.	Bedford
Lieut.	Thomas Jobson Jackson ...	,,	,,
Ensign	James Howard	,,	,,
Hon.Asst. Surg.	Griffith Francis Dorset Evans, M.D.	1 March	,,

2ND COMPANY, TODDINGTON

Captain	William Cooper Cooper ...	1 March	Toddington Park, Dunstable
Lieut.	John Thomas Green* ...	,,	Dunstable
Ensign	Wm. Frederick Green† ...	,,	,,

* Resigned for Promotion in 8th Company.

† Resignation accepted by Letter from Secretary for War, 15th September 1860.

Digitized by Google

4TH COMPANY, DUNSTABLE

Rank	Name	Date of Commission	Address
		1860	
Captain	Arthur Macnamara*	24 April	Dunstable
Lieut.	William Medland	24 April	Houghton
Ensign	William Eames	,,	Dunstable
Hon.Asst. Surg.	Frederick Farr	13 Aug.	,,

*Resignation accepted 15th August.

5TH COMPANY, AMPTHILL AND SILSOE

Captain	John Hatfield Brooks, Major Bengal Cavalry	26 April	Flitwick Manor, Ampthill
Lieut.	Francis John Thynne	,,	Haynes Pk., Bedford
Ensign	Henry Platt	,,	Flitwick, Ampthill
Hon.Asst. Surg.	William Collingwood	,,	Ampthill

6TH COMPANY, LUTON

Captain	John Sambrook Crawley ...	16 May	Stockwood, Luton
Lieut.	Edmund Waller Vyse	,,	Luton
Ensign	Thomas Smith...	,,	,,
Hon.Asst. Surg.	Alfred Heale	18 June	,,

7TH COMPANY, BIGGLESWADE

Captain	Robert Henry Lindsell, Lieut.-Colonel, late 28th Regt. ...	11 Sept.	Biggleswade
Lieut.	Frederick Hogge	,,	,,
Ensign	Frederick Gresham	,,	Chicksands, Shefford

Digitized by Google

8TH COMPANY, WOBURN

Rank	Name	Date of Commission	Address
		1860	
Captain	John Thomas Green	10 Sept.	Woburn
Lieut.	William Frederick Green ...	,,	,,
Ensign	Henry Russell	,,	,,
Hon.Asst. Surg.	Benjamin Lawrence Hawkins, G.M.C.	,,	,,

It is clear that at first the Government had tolerated rather than encouraged the Volunteers, whom they required to clothe and equip themselves. But later Parliament followed the lead of public opinion and decided upon maintaining the Volunteers as a part of the regular defensive system. The character of the Force then began to change and by the outbreak of the four years' Civil War in America in 1861, with few exceptions, the wealthy and professional classes, from which the Volunteers had been largely recruited upon the threat of a French invasion, withdrew and were replaced by the artisan class. This added both to the strength and permanence of the Force; but, since the source of private subscriptions was being dried up by the change, the Government introduced a system of capital grants. It is particularly noticeable that a large number of Bedfordshire Volunteer officers applied for leave to resign their Commissions in the spring of 1861. Among these was Captain John Hatfield Brooks, who wished to rejoin the Bengal Cavalry in India, in which regiment it will be remembered he held the commission of a Major.

There were a good many troubles in 1861, for the formation of a battalion called for more exacting staff work, and it must be remembered that the Volunteers were at that time still administered by the Lord Lieutenant. We thus find the Clerk to the Lieutenancy calling frantically for "Strength Returns" from Company Commanders, such

Digitized by Google

Returns being in some cases as much as six months overdue, wherefore Mr. John Green was getting it hot from the War Office for not making up his own " Consolidated Returns."

In addition, things were not going well at Luton, and Captain Crawley wrote a letter to the Clerk to the Lieutenancy, which was tantamount to a resignation ; but the real cause of complaint seems to have come from the men themselves, who hinted that they were not going to attend drills unless the officers performed their duties better. It was then suggested that the newly-appointed Adjutant should pay close attention to the Luton Corps with a view to saving it, otherwise it would have to be reduced to a Sub-Division. Subsequently Captain Crawley tendered his resignation in proper form, and Ensign Cochlin took over the Command. This matter of the Luton Company was a serious one and even by February 1863 no satisfactory Return of Strength could be obtained, although the numbers were believed to be insufficient to warrant the appointment of a Captain. However, Ensign Cochlin carried on all through the period of trouble until he resigned his commission on 20th June 1864.

In May 1861 the rules for the government of the 1st Bedfordshire Administrative Battalion were drawn up ready for approval, but the matter was delayed pending the appointment of a new Lord Lieutenant. In the following month Earl Cowper assumed that office, and on 1st July the rules for the Battalion were passed by the War Office. This led to a speeding up in the granting of commissions to officers, but does not seem to have improved the staff work, for in October the Clerk to the Lieutenancy was again breathing fire and slaughter because the Muster Roll Returns were either incorrectly made or not sent in at all, although they had been due since the beginning of August.

The 1st April 1862 was the date of the first local Volunteer Review, in which the Bedfordshire Battalion took part at Luton in conjunction with the 1st and 2nd

Digitized by Google

PL. II.] [*B* 18

THE EASTER MONDAY VOLUNTEER REVIEW

AT DUNSTABLE, 1877.

Digitized by Google

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R L

Digitized by Google

Hertfordshire Rifle Volunteer Battalions. The reviewing officer was Lieut.-Colonel Ibbotson, Inspecting Officer of the district, Lieut.-Colonel Russell commanded the 1st Bedfords, Lieut.-Colonel Cust the 1st Hertfords, but I do not know who was in command of the 2nd Hertfords.

In June 1862 yet another Company was added to the Battalion, through the employees of Messrs. Howards' Works, at Bedford, wishing to form an Artisan Corps. John Edward Bodger, of St. Mary's, seems to have been the prime mover in this matter and the services of sixty-eight artisans as a separate company, to be united in the Battalion and numbered 9, were accepted on 7th July 1862.

In the foregoing circumstances it is inexplicable that no application was made for the appointment of officers to the No. 9 Corps until May 1864. The officers then appointed were Lieut. H. H. Green from No. 1 Corps to command No. 9 Corps as Captain on promotion, and two of Messrs. Howards' clerks, Charles Johnston and William Henry Lester, to be Lieutenant and Ensign respectively.

In the middle of 1863 Major Hatfield Brooks returned from India and was desirous of resuming his Volunteer activities, and there was, moreover, a general wish that he should be promoted a Volunteer Major and appointed Second-in-Command of the Battalion. Certain matters of precedence, in connection with promotions that had been made during his absence abroad, caused, however, a good deal of trouble, and it was some time before he took over the duties of Second-in-Command. But in August 1863 he resumed the command of the Ampthill Company.

The great event of that year was the first field day in which the Battalion took part. This was held at Cambridge on 25th May, when Nos. 1, 5 and 8 Companies were represented by six officers, nine sergeants and 105 men. On 24th October the whole Battalion participated in a field day at Oxford.

The first annual inspection of the Battalion was held at Ampthill on 14th June 1864 and in the following month recruiting greatly improved and Luton asked permission to

Digitized by Google

form a second company, but to this the Lord Lieutenant would not agree, on the grounds that although the strength of two companies might be readily raised at the moment, it was unlikely to be maintained. In 1867 the application was renewed, as at that time Lieutenant Wm. Phillips was pushing the Volunteer movement energetically in the town. This officer was the grandfather of Mr. W. Phillips, the present General Manager of the Gas Company at Luton, and he was also the father of A. F. Phillips of St. Albans, G. T. Phillips, Charles Phillips, S. T. Phillips, and Edward Phillips, the latter a sergeant and the others privates, who all served in the Luton Corps. Dr. S. T. Phillips is still alive in Canada and Mr. Charles Phillips, although over eighty years of age, still lives in Luton.

There were many field days in 1860. The most important one took place on 20th May, when the Bedfordshire Volunteer Infantry Brigade combined with the Bedfordshire Regiment of Militia and thus, for the first time, co-operated with troops other than Volunteers.

Activities were suspended in September, owing to an order being issued that Volunteers must not attend political meetings in uniform, nor must the Battalion, or any part of it, be assembled for drill or any other purpose between the issue of the writ and the termination of the Parliamentary election in the County or in the Borough of Bedford. The Volunteers attended camp that year at Houghton Conquest, and went to Ampthill the year following.

After the Ampthill Camp was over Major Brooks tendered his resignation.

Luton, in 1870, were well up to strength, but were complaining bitterly that the company had had no captain since the resignation of Captain Thomas Sworder in May 1862, and, therefore, Lieut. William Phillips, who had done splendid service in keeping them together and building up their strength, was at last granted his step, and presented by his Company with a sword of honour to commemorate his good work and consequent promotion.

Digitized by Google

This sword of honour is still a treasured possession in the keeping of his grandson at Luton.

Towards the end of that year the Headquarters of the Battalion, which had been first at Bedford, was moved from Toddington to Woburn. In March 1871 the Headquarters of No. 7 Company were transferred from Biggleswade to Shefford, five miles away, as all commissioned officers and the majority of other ranks were then living in or near Shefford; and, moreover, there were no rifle butts at Biggleswade, where the arrangements for the care of arms were also unsatisfactory.

The year 1871 is of importance in the history of the Battalion, since October found rumours current that the resignations of both the Commanding Officer and the Adjutant were imminent. An enquiry from Lord Cowper to Mr. Green, however, elicited the reply that no official notification of any such resignations had reached the Lieutenancy Office, but that Captain Morgan had applied for a retired allowance. Mr. Green added that he had interviewed the Adjutant, thought him well under middle age and as fit and capable as ever of performing the duties of his commission. In these circumstances the War Office refused Captain Morgan's application.

Following upon this Lieut.-Colonel Russell, Captain Morgan, the Adjutant, and Captain Phillips, Commanding the Luton Company, all tendered the resignation of their Commissions. The Commanding Officer's resignation was accepted on 9th January 1872 and that of the Adjutant two days later.

Captain J. T. Green, son of the Clerk to the Lieutenancy, who had been commissioned originally in the No. 2 Toddington Company, but was then commanding the 8th Woburn Company, was due for promotion. Lord Cowper, however, would not at that time recommend the appointment of a new Commanding Officer, as he felt that the passing of " The Regulation of the Forces Act, 1871—Part II Auxiliary Forces," had left him, as Lord Lieutenant, holding the management of the Volunteers merely *ad*

Digitized by Google

interim, until such time as the War Office should have completed its new arrangements.

The Lord Lieutenant did, however, agree to recommend the appointment as Adjutant of Captain Edward Jekyll, who remained with the Battalion until December 1875, when he was succeeded by Captain J. M. Webster.

In mid July 1872 Captain Green was promoted to the rank of Major and assumed temporary command of the Battalion. He was subsequently promoted Lieut.-Colonel. He commanded the Battalion for many years and, in 1878, succeeded his father in the Clerkship to the Lieutenancy.

In 1877, on Easter Monday, a great review was held at Dunstable, of which an interesting impression is given in Plate II. This review was followed by a period of great prosperity, as is indicated by a comparison of the Strength Returns for 1877 and 1879. In 1878 Luton at last achieved its ambition of raising a second Company.

According to *The Luton Times and Advertiser*, of 18th July 1879, the local Rifle Corps attended their annual Church Parade in showery weather, and "it was a sight for all men to see, marching down King's Street, one of the men in full uniform, carrying aloft an umbrella." From the same source one learns that in that year the Luton Volunteers sent a detachment of over a hundred strong to attend camp at Lowestoft, under the command of Captain Harris, and Lieuts. Benning and Carruthers.

STRENGTH RETURNS OF 1ST ADMINISTRATIVE BATTALION BEDFORDSHIRE REGIMENT, 1877–79

	Coy.	*Strength*	*Commanded by*		*Strength*	*Head-quarters*
1877	No. 1	127	E. R. GREEN	1879	169	Bedford
	2	60	J. GREEN		62	Toddington
	4	64	W. HAMBLING		61	Dunstable
	5	73	J. C. CAMPION		61	Ampthill
	6	120	T. C. HARRIS		174	Luton
	7	72	H. M. PRYOR (Major)		68	Shefford
	8	66	T. T. TANQUERY		58	Woburn
		582			653	

Digitized by Google

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
K L

Digitized by Google

1

2

3

4

5

PL. III.] COMMANDING OFFICERS, 1860–1912. [*C* 23

1. Lieut.-Col. The Hon. Hastings Russell, M.P. (1st Commanding Officer), 1860–72. 2. Lieut.-Col. J. T. Green, V.D. (2nd Commanding Officer), 1872–1895. 3. Lieut.-Col. E. R. Green, V.D. (3rd Commanding Officer), 1895–1902. 4. Lieut.-Col. A. Lindgard Green, D.S.O., V.D. (4th Commanding Officer), 1902–1904. 5. Lieut.-Col. Spenser Jackson, T.D., D.L. (5th Commanding Officer and Honorary Colonel, 5th Bn. Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regt.), 1904–1912.

Digitized by Google

In the first phase of modern military history the Militia and Volunteer Battalions were independent units, separate from each other, as also from the Regular Army. They were administered by the Lords Lieutenant, and, after 1871, by the War Office.

In 1881 the whole military system was overhauled and many changes made. Up to that year the Regular Infantry of the Line were numbered consecutively and known as Regiments of Foot. By the new system of linked Battalions two were to be combined in one regiment. For instance, the 28th Foot and the 61st Foot became the Gloucestershire Regiment, while the 16th Foot was enlarged and became the 1st and 2nd Battalions The Bedfordshire Regiment. All the Militia and Volunteer units were then affiliated to Line Regiments. For example, the old Volunteer units of Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and Huntingdonshire became the 1st (Herts) V.B. Bedfordshire Regt., the 2nd (Herts) V.B. Bedfordshire Regt., the 3rd V.B. Bedfordshire Regt. (formerly the 1st Administrative Battalion Bedfordshire Rifle Volunteers) and the 4th (Hunts) V.B. Bedfordshire Regt.

Thus the old Regiments of Foot were given territorial titles and allotted to territorial areas, while the Volunteer Battalions were brigaded by themselves, according to the territorial area of the regular units to which they were auxiliary.

Up to this time the Volunteers had been exclusively "Rifle Corps," and the "Rifles" title was preserved after the Volunteer Infantry Battalions had been assimilated to the Line Battalions in matters of drill and uniform; so that even scarlet uniformed battalions did not carry colours and pouch belts were still worn instead of sashes. Incidentally, the 5th Bn. The Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regt. has to this day the same Regimental March as the Rifle Brigade and Rifle Green forms a part of its Regimental Colours.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER TWO

The South African War Period

Institution of the Territorial Force—5th Bn. The Bedfordshire Regiment

The South African War which came in 1899 was to prove the turning point in the history of the Volunteers, who preceded the present Territorial Army. Lieut.-Colonel E. R. Green was now in command of the 3rd V.B. Bedfordshire Regt., which had risen, phœnix-like, from the ashes of its predecessor, the old 1st Administrative Bn. Bedfordshire Rifle Volunteers. He succeeded Lieut.-Colonel J. T. Green, who had joined the Regiment on 3rd January 1860.

Two months after the outbreak of war Volunteer Battalions throughout Great Britain were asked to furnish service companies to join the Regular Line Battalions, to which the Volunteer units were affiliated.

Lieut.-Colonel Green was, himself, one of the first to volunteer for active service overseas, and within a week 108 rank and file of the 3rd Volunteer Battalion had enrolled their names for service in South Africa. It is further worthy of note that every single officer of the four battalions forming The Bedfordshire Volunteer Infantry Brigade at once volunteered for active service at the front. In actual fact this brigade supplied seven officers and 272 N.C.O.'s and men to serve with the 2nd Bn. The Bedfordshire Regt. in South Africa. As a reward for this splendid response, His Majesty King Edward VII was graciously pleased to grant :—

" In recognition of services rendered during the South

Digitized by Google

African War, to bear upon their appointments the words 'South Africa, 1900–02.'"

This gave the Volunteers their first right to assume Battle Honours, to which many others were added during the period of the Great War.

It is difficult to speak of the active service of the Volunteers as an historical entity, for they took their place as companies of their regular battalions and bore their share of the fighting and stern duties which fell to the lot of the British Army in South Africa.

In the first week of January 1900 Captain A. J. Hills, Lieutenant E. W. Brighten, Sergeant J. Hawkins, Lance-Sergeant R. Crawley and eleven privates of No. 1 Company volunteered for active service. This circumstance is of particular interest as it marked the beginning of the active service career of a very distinguished soldier, Lieut.-Colonel E. W. Brighten, C.M.G., D.S.O., T.D., who at present commands the 2nd Bn. The Bedfordshire Regt.

Although he was one of the first among the officers to volunteer, he did not go out to South Africa until he sailed in charge of the fourth draft, who were enlisted in January 1902, and embarked on the S.S. *Cawdor Castle* on 15th February in that year.

After the South African War Mr. Brighten returned to England and became a partner in the Luton firm of solicitors, Messrs. Brown & Brighten. He rose, subsequently, to the command of the South Bedfordshire Detachment of the 5th Bn. The Bedfordshire Regt., T.F., in which he held the rank of Major, and was Second-in-Command, when the battalion was mobilized for active service in 1914.

In due course Major Brighten was promoted Lieut.-Colonel; he succeeded Lieut.-Colonel F. N. Butler as Commanding Officer and took the battalion out to Gallipoli in 1915. He was mentioned in despatches by General Sir Ian Hamilton early in 1916, and was awarded a C.M.G. for services in the field. Later, he served with the battalion in Palestine. After the war Major and Brevet

Digitized by Google

Lieut.-Colonel E. W. Brighten, who had already added the D.S.O. to his other honours, took a regular commission, and in 1928 became Second-in-Command of the 2nd Bn. The Bedfordshire Regt., in the command of which he succeeded Lieut.-Colonel W. R. H. Dann, D.S.O., on 2nd June 1929.

We must return, however, to the South African War period. By 24th January 1900 the 3rd Volunteer Battalion had found its full quota and the draft to form the company from the Bedfordshire Volunteer Infantry Brigade paraded at the Regimental Depot, Kempston, under Captain Lingard Green, who later gained the D.S.O., to be inspected for service at the front.

This Volunteer Service Company was made up of twenty-eight rank and file, 1st (Herts) V.B. Bedfordshire Regt., a similar number from the 2nd (Herts) V.B., and fifty-six rank and file from the 3rd V.B., making a total of 112 other ranks, with Captain A. Lingard Green, 3rd V.B., Lieutenant Arthur Braithwaite, 2nd V.B., and Lieutenant A. Trethewy, 1st V.B., in command.

After the inspection the Company was played from the Barracks to Bedford Town Hall and there attested by Mr. Hedley Baxter, Mayor of Bedford.

The younger generation, who can only remember the Great War, can have no conception of the patriotic fervour which marked the South African War period, when every town, village and hamlet gave its farewell dinner to the departing Volunteers. The following is a full list of the officers, N.C.O.'s and men of the 3rd Volunteer Battalion, who went out to South Africa with the first draft.

Captain A. L. Green, Sergeant C. F. Jones, Privates E. Brightman, A. Brittain, A. J. Whitmarsh, C. Bowery, F. J. White, H. G. Fathers, V. Rainbow, G. Denniss, H. H. Quenby, W. Henton, F. Rudd, T. Carruthers, H. Day, E. H. Hall, A. J. Goodman, A. V. Bradley, W. Gilbert, T. Hulett, H. Payne, J. Anderson, J. H. Smith, F. W. Smith, F. Izzard, C. J. Kemp, F. Dunham, M. J. Joy, F. Tompkins, T. Wren, H. Anderson, D. Wright, F. Allen,

Digitized by Google

A. Conquest, C. J. Kitchener,* J. E. Blee, E. T. Rudkin, G. Lightfoot, H. Doughty, W. Duffin, and W. W. Moseley.

At that period A and B were the Bedford Companies, under the command of Captain A. W. H. Lees.

On the 12th February, the Mayor, Mr. Hedley Baxter, entertained the Service Company at Bedford Town Hall. Prior to the banquet, however, the Revs. G. F. Halls and A. J. Foster conducted a service in St. Paul's Church, at which the farewell address was given by the Vicar, the Rev. Lambert Woodward.

At that time the weather was bitterly cold and snow lay thick upon the ground. The night of 13th February found the men skylarking and snowballing in barracks, despite the fact that they were to parade at 5.40 a.m. the next morning to entrain for Southampton. It was a night of raging tempest, and the bugles blowing Reveille well before 5 a.m. brought the 117 men of the Service Company out on to a dark, bleak and dreary barrack square, covered by a foot of snow.

There was a quick bustle of khaki-helmeted figures, scurrying through the darkness, the usual terse requests, couched in unstinted language, for information as to missing articles; another bugle, a sharp word of command, and a solid, dark mass formed black against the gleaming snow. Captain Green called for three cheers for the Depot and the Active Service Company marched out.

There was no crowd waiting to cheer them on their way, and there was no band to play; but one of the men fished a penny whistle out of his haversack and so heartened the short march through deep drifts, blinding snow and a stinging gale, from Kempston to the Midland Station, where a great crowd was waiting.

Again there was no delay, and a few minutes after the Company had entrained they steamed out of the station to the accompaniment of roars of cheering from the people,

* Private C. J. Kitchener, after being invalided home, volunteered again for active service and proceeded to South Africa for the second time with the fourth draft.

Digitized by Google

who had come to see them off, and the strains of "Auld Lang Syne" from the band that had assembled.

A cold, and none too comfortable, journey to Southampton followed, but that afternoon of 14th February they found comfortable quarters aboard the S.S. *Greek*, which, like all transports sailing for South Africa, and in sharp contrast to our recollections of the Great War, was given a great send-off.

On the voyage out Lieutenant A. Trethewy was appointed Ship's Adjutant, but the weeks that passed were peculiarly free from incident, so that even innoculation and the sight of an occasional ship were all matters of moment to the men.

On 9th March the *Greek* arrived at Cape Town, where the troops disembarked and were at once entrained for Richmond Road, which is a station about 400 miles up country from Cape Town.

Seven weary weeks of guard finding, musketry, route marching, patrolling, building sangars and digging trenches followed.

Orders, which were daily expected, for the Company to join the Line Battalion failed to eventuate, and both cricket and football matches were arranged to keep the men contented.

At last orders were received to be in readiness for the move up country as soon as they had handed over to the Surrey Militia. The Active Service Company was unlucky in arriving at Senekal, north of Bloemfontein, two days after the big fight at that place.

At one farm on the way up they had commandeered about forty oxen, and their picket had not been at the farm more than half an hour when they saw some horsemen coming across the veldt. These turned out to be Boers, bearing a white flag. Most of the twenty-three were carrying British Lee-Enfield rifles, and their boots and horses and mules were obviously British property. The Boers said that they had found them on a kopje. From Winburg the Volunteers had their first taste of

Digitized by Google

convoy duty, proceeding on a two-days' trek to Karrefontein and back. Nine days later the Company formed the advance guard of a column proceeding to Senekal, over thirteen miles of very rough roads; but no man fell out.

At Senekal Lieutenant Trethewy was appointed Medical Officer to the Brigade, there being no officer of the R.A.M.C. available, while the Company was cast for a long spell of outpost duty, the monotony of which was made memorable by the annexation of the Orange Free State, the ceremony taking place in the Market Square at Senekal, on 10th June.

Many hardships were experienced in the camp at Senekal, where rations were bad and the morning cold intense; sickness was rampant, and clothing was rapidly wearing out. One man wrote home at that time: "I have had to cut the bottoms off my trousers to patch 'another part,' and you needn't be surprised if I come home with precious few clothes at all." Another summed up the situation when he wrote: "One good smack at the enemy would put everyone into good heart, but the Company, unfortunately, is employed, constantly, on convoys and guards, and we cannot get even a reasonable ration of bread."

But, as every soldier knows, if, in the words of Rudyard Kipling's immortal Private Mulvaney, you drink to "a bloody war; north, south, east and west," you get it, and generally sooner than later.

On 22nd June the Bedfords marched to Winburg, and while people at home were sitting down to their peaceful breakfasts the Boer guns were opening fire upon the Mounted Infantry, who had been sent out to reinforce the British flank in a very pretty little action.

As it happened the second draft from home, under Lieutenant Veasey, of the 1st (Herts) V.B. Bedfordshire Regt., who was later to command a company of Regulars, arrived within that same four and twenty hours, and so had no such long time to await their baptism of fire as the first draft had endured.

Digitized by Google

In this action one officer was badly hit and five men were wounded, including Private Dunham, of Silsoe.

This was the first occasion upon which the Volunteers had been in action and General Clements, when it was all over, and the Boers dislodged from their position, sent for Captain Lingard Green to congratulate him upon the splendid behaviour of his men.

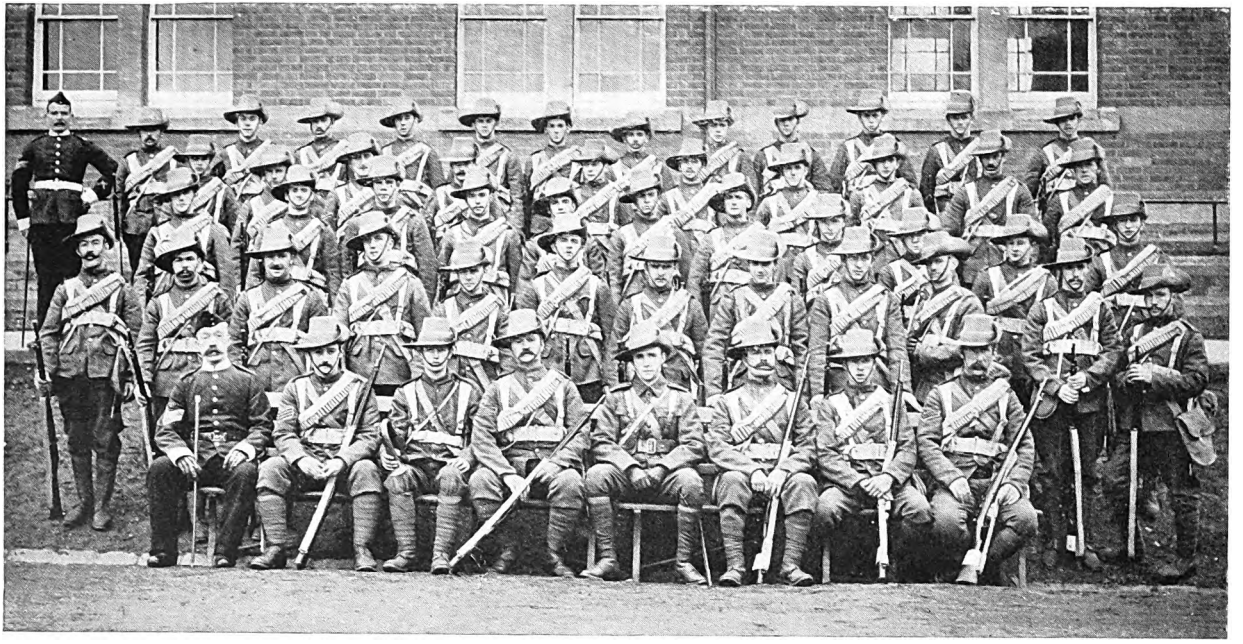
From this time onwards shelling and rifle fire became normal incidents of the day's round. Following upon the engagement at Winburg the Battalion rested for twenty-four hours at Marais' Farm, awaiting the arrival of a 4.7 gun from Winburg. Next morning they moved out at 4 a.m., three companies of the Line Battalion acting as escort to an ox convoy, and the Volunteer Company furnishing the advance guard. The next day they were on flank guard, and at 9.30 in the morning came under a galling fire which lasted until dusk. They had had a punishing day. Despite that circumstance, the Volunteers were detailed for outpost duty, and a hard night they had; for a bitter north-east wind was blowing and the men had neither blankets nor great coats to protect them from the cold that cut like a knife.

Next morning the column pushed on, with the Service Company again providing flank guard under fire for four hours. That night they camped at the Zand River, but got little sleep. The Boer snipers saw to that, and the whole of the next day the Bedfords were subjected to heavy artillery fire. Then came two days of merciful rest, before a further two days of marching brought the weary troops to the Valsch River. There they did outpost all night and next day furnished the advance guard on the final sixteen mile stage of the march to Lindley.

A fortnight of entrenching and wiring followed, and everyone began to realise the truth of the axiom that warfare in Africa is made of one week's trekking for every hour of fighting.

It was somewhere about this time, too, that the Service Company had an unpleasant journey from the rest camp at

Digitized by Google



PL. IV.] SOUTH AFRICAN WAR PERIOD. [*C* 30

The 3rd Active Service Company, commanded by Lieut. E. W. Brighten, 3rd V. B. Bedfordshire Regt., and raised from the units comprising the Bedfordshire Volunteer Infantry Brigade.

Digitized by Google

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
N L

Digitized by Google

Bloemfontein to Winburg. Most of the journey was made with the men perched on the tops of loaded wagons. The cold and the rough state of the roads, over which the wagons rocked and lurched in the darkness, made sleep well nigh impossible. Those who did go to sleep promptly fell from their precarious perches, others lost their helmets, and some their rifles.

A long trick of outpost duty on the high kopjes round Winburg followed, with one night on and one night off duty, and climbing up and down the hills with rations in between, while the men were scorched by day and frozen by night, until they were moved to Meyer's Kop, and marched out again the same night to join General Paget at Bultfontein.

" And a hell of a night it was," as more than one lad was willing to testify, for the rain came down in torrents and the roads were wellnigh impassable. For two further days that foul march continued, before the Battalion joined up with General Clements at Witteberg.

More marches followed, and culminated in a fight at Naauwpoort Nek on 29th July, when the Service Company formed part of the right attack. The Boers were quickly cleared out of the place and the troops allowed to rest for four days, but between the 3rd and 4th August escorts had to be found for the Boers who had surrendered under Prinsloo.

At the end of August the Volunteer Company found itself back at Winburg after a pretty hard time at Kroonstadt. From Winburg, now becoming more or less of a " home town " to them, they were rushed by forced march and armoured train to Ventersberg Weg Ra, a station on the line they had quitted but two days earlier, to repulse an attack upon the railway by Commandant Olivier. The attack, however, petered out and back they went to Winburg. There they were met by the Town Commandant, who had already wired to stop their return. As luck would have it his telegram had gone astray, for the men had hardly begun to detrain before the Boer

Digitized by Google

guns opened and Olivier, acting in concert with Haasbruck, launched a very real attack from Yeomanry Hill, a high kopje overlooking the town. Such men as had left the trucks were quickly bundled back into them, and the Line Battalion, with its Volunteer Company, steamed out of the station. Two minutes later they all tumbled out at the foot of the kopje.

Major Lloyd deployed the Bedfords in three lines—firing line, supports and reserves—before he led them up the hill under a hot artillery and rifle fire. Then the British batteries raced up the slope and came into action. Under their covering fire the infantry got to close quarters; a party of Brabant's Horse outflanked the enemy, cutting off his retreat. By the time the Bedfords reached the trenches, which were held by two companies of Manchester Militia, the Boers were only four hundred yards away, but the added volume of rifle fire drove them off, forcing them to abandon their dead and wounded comrades.

As Brabant's Horse galloped round the left flank a small party of Boers was seen running to a farm for shelter. One company of the Bedfords was left on the plain to keep the Boers under fire, while the other three companies moved round the right flank under cover. When they got to the top of the hill they saw the Boers leaving the farm, and coming straight towards them. The Bedfords lay low, for they could see Brabant's men already closing the left flank. At 700 yards range fire was reopened, and the Boers found themselves surrounded. Then they threw up their hands and the "Cease Fire" was sounded.

The prisoners were taken and marched back to Winburg under escort. As the party was nearing the station the whole population turned out to see the prisoners, but no one suspected their identity, until some Kaffir boys shouted, "Hullo, Olivier. They've got you at last, have they?" The Bedfords stared for a moment, and then Commandant Olivier, finding himself recognised, asked Captain Finlay to take him to the O.C. British Troops.

Digitized by Google

He was a very sick man, was Olivier ; for he had boasted to his burghers that morning that he would breakfast in the town. So he did, but not quite in the conditions he had anticipated.

The Service Company did very well in that engagement, and was congratulated through General Bruce by Lord Roberts, General Clements and General Kelly-Kenny.

Shortly after the engagement at Winburg there was a rumour that the Volunteer Service Company was about to return home. On 22nd September, however, Colonel Pilcher, at that time commanding the 2nd Bn. The Bedfordshire Regt., issued orders to Captain Lingard Green to take his Volunteer Company and fifty Mounted Infantry of the Royal Scots to form entrenched posts at Alexandria and Springhaan, their particular job being to protect the signal station on Thaba 'Nchu Mountain, and to prevent small bodies of Boers from operating in the district. The position they were to occupy was part of the line of posts and block-houses, which stretched from Sanna's Post right along to Ladybrand on the Basuto border.

Early in October the Volunteer Company had entered upon the monotonous duty of guarding a six miles frontage, and on this work it was employed for the next seven months.

Some idea of the only break in the deadly dull routine may be gathered from the diary of Captain Lingard Green, from which the following are extracts :—

" Force of thirteen mounted Boers driven off by entrenched post holding six men of Volunteer Company."

" Two Boer dispatch riders surrendered on being fired on."

" Headed off five Boers who failed to pass the line."

" Sentries fired on at night."

Occasionally, however, there was even greater excitement ; as, for instance, on 16th November, when the enemy reconnoitred the position by day, but failed to draw the fire of the Volunteer posts. At six o'clock that evening about 1,200 Boers appeared, advancing in a

Digitized by Google

south-westerly direction from Lovedale, with wagons, cape-carts and a field gun. This force, moving in three columns, with the wagons in rear, got within a thousand yards of Hut Post under cover. From 6.45 p.m. onwards they kept up intermittent shelling and incessant rifle fire for three hours. There were no casualties at the Post, but the Boers got through in the darkness.

The following day news was received by helio from the Officer Commanding at Thaba 'Nchu, that a Commando under Haasbruck was in laager on a farm close to Brand's Drift, and would probably attempt to break through during the night. This attempt the Volunteers dealt with far more successfully. Midnight arrived, with the echoing rumble of wagon wheels approaching. The six men of the Volunteer Company, who held the Patchoana position, opened rapid fire, killing one Boer and his horse, whereupon the rest turned back, despite the fact, as it was afterwards discovered, that the enemy's strength was at least a thousand men.

Although active service conditions still obtained, the Bedfords had a good time over the Christmas of 1900, and on Boxing Day at Thaba 'Nchu, their athletes figured very prominently in a sports meeting, which was got up by the civilian population. In this connection they enjoyed further successes in another sports meeting held at Findlay's Farm, on 28th January.

A second Active Service Company of two officers and eighty-four N.C.O.'s and men had been enlisted in England on 26th February 1901.

This draft was in charge of 2nd-Lieutenants C. P. N. Raikes, 2nd V.B., and H. Collet, 1st V.B., with Sergt.-Instructor Luke Timms of the 1st V.B., acting as Colour-Sergeant. It was made up of fifty-seven 1st V.B., twenty-two 2nd V.B., and four 3rd V.B.

They left Bedford on 16th March, sailed the next day for South Africa, where they arrived in due course and went immediately to Thaba 'Nchu to join the 1st Active Service Company.

Digitized by Google

Meanwhile, the original Active Service Company had been ordered home on 1st April. They embarked aboard the S.S. *St. Andrew* on the 22nd of the month, but before leaving Bloemfontein received a telegram from Colonel Pilcher, C.B., wishing them a safe return and regretting that they were leaving his command.

The *St. Andrew*, filled with " time-expireds," including Captain A. L. Green and 93 of the 113 men of the 1st Active Service Volunteer Company, which had sailed for South Africa on St. Valentine's Day 1900, berthed at Southampton on Thursday, 16th May 1901, the men thus having been absent from England for a period of one year and ninety-one days.

Throughout their brief term of active service they had served with patience in hardship and distinction in action, and on 27th September 1901, the name of Captain Lingard Green appeared in the list of " Rewards for Services during the operations in South Africa," His Majesty having been graciously pleased to appoint him a Companion of the Distinguished Service Order.

The 16th May was a busy day in Bedford. Telegrams were despatched broadcast, posters went up, rockets were fired from the Fire Station, and Mr. Stock, the old Town Crier, resumed his bell, which has probably not since been heard in the County Town. Peals of bells rang out from St. Paul's Church and the town was decorated in an amazingly short space of time, while the men of the 1st Bedfordshire Royal Engineer Volunteers, by super-human labours, ran up a triumphal arch at the foot of the old bridge, and there was another arch erected at the Midland Station.

All the way from the station to the Barracks at Kempston the home-coming Volunteers were wildly cheered by an enthusiastic crowd, as they passed along headed by the band of their own Battalion and led by Lieut.-Colonel E. R. Green.

From the Barracks they marched to St. Paul's for a Thanksgiving Service, followed by a banquet at the Corn

Digitized by Google

Exchange, over which the Mayor, Mr. Henry Burridge, presided.

Following the banquet in Bedford, Major Lingard Green was given a reception at Wootton, Captain Trethewy at Hertford, and Captain Arthur Braithwaite at St. Albans and Harpenden, while the returning N.C.O.'s and men were received with processions, bands, decorations and equal rejoicings in Arlesey, Biggleswade, Potton, Sandy, Luton, Dunstable, and the other places from which they had gone out on active service.

The following had died during the campaign :—

Private	H. Adams ...	... Enteric
,,	H. Anderson*	... Dysentery
,,	J. Anderson*	... ,,
,,	A. Bradley ...	... ,,
,,	A. Goodman	... Enteric
,,	W. Pocock ...	... ,,
,,	H. Valentine	... ,,
,,	F. Morley ...	... ,,
,,	F. Dunham	... ,,

* Belonged to 3rd V.B. Bedfordshire Regt.

After the 2nd Active Service Company had been at Thaba 'Nchu for six weeks they were moved to Sanna's Post. There they remained, keeping open the lines of communication from that post to Bloemfontein, until they were relieved from duty to return home towards the end of March 1902.

Apart from a few of the men who served with the Mounted Infantry, the others undertook that most tedious of all duties, the occupation of block-houses on lines of communication. There was, for them, none of the excitement which had been enjoyed by the first Company, and which is such a great incentive to the soldier to remain cheerful on active service. None-the-less, they did their duty cheerfully and well. They were not, however, without their casualties. Private W. Webb died at Kimberley on 25th May, three days after Private G. Field of Bedford had died at Bloemfontein of enteric.

Digitized by Google

On Friday, 25th April, the *Lismore Castle* arrived at Southampton with two officers and sixty N.C.O.'s and men of the 2nd Volunteer Company, who were received at Bedford Station upon the same evening by Lieut.-Colonel E. R. Green, V.D., commanding 3rd V.B. Bedfordshire Regt., the Mayor and Corporation and local troops and bands. They, like the first Company, marched through cheering crowds and decorated streets to Kempston Barracks, where they were addressed by Colonel Young. They were not, however, disbanded until the following Monday. Although Private Field had died at Bloemfontein, Corporal Hopkins and Private W. Piggott returned safely.

In the meantime a fourth draft of fifty-five N.C.O.'s and men, which was in reality the third Active Service Company, supplied by the Bedfordshire Volunteer Infantry Brigade, representing Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire, had gone out to South Africa to relieve the second Company.

Lieutenant E. W. Brighten of the 3rd V.B. was in charge of this Company, which was enlisted on 23rd January 1902, and sailed on the S.S. *Cawdor Castle* on 15th February 1902.

On 9th March they disembarked at Cape Town, and with other drafts proceeded to Bloemfontein. Before they reached there, however, they were involved in a train smash, in which a man of the Volunteer Service Company of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders was killed. On 15th March, the day after their arrival at Bloemfontein, they went on escort duty with Boer prisoners to Elandsfontein. Four days later they joined the 2nd Battalion at Brandford, where ten men were posted to the Mounted Infantry, and the rest put into occupation of five block-houses.

From the end of April to the beginning of June the Volunteer Company was on trek with B and C Companies of the Line Battalion, either acting as escort to ox convoys or finding outposts and other duties, until, finally, it fetched up at Hoopstad on 4th June in time to hear

Digitized by Google

Peace proclaimed. Three weeks later, 24th June, the 3rd Active Service Company, or fourth draft, from the Volunteer Battalions of the Bedfordshire Regiment sailed from Cape Town aboard the R.M.S. *Walmer Castle.*

This particular Company was in Africa for four months, but during that time had a fair taste of active service conditions, for it was literally kept on the move the whole time.

Meanwhile, the Volunteer Battalions at home had received a more complete and uniform training than ever before; the strength of the Volunteers had been increased and twenty-four battalions selected for special training with the regular Home Army in the Field Force.

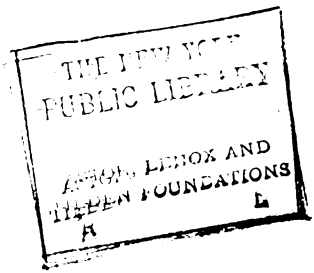
Between the years 1902–5 partial reorganisation took place, and in 1907–8, at which time the 3rd V.B. Bedfordshire Regt. was commanded by Lieut.-Colonel Spenser Jackson, a final reorganisation was brought about, and the Volunteers were re-enlisted into the Territorial Force, which provided the hub of the Haldane Scheme, as a completely self-contained army, with the higher organisation—never possessed by the Volunteers—varying but little from that in use in the Regular Army.

The Territorial Force was to be permanent; but, in its initial stages, was largely experimental.

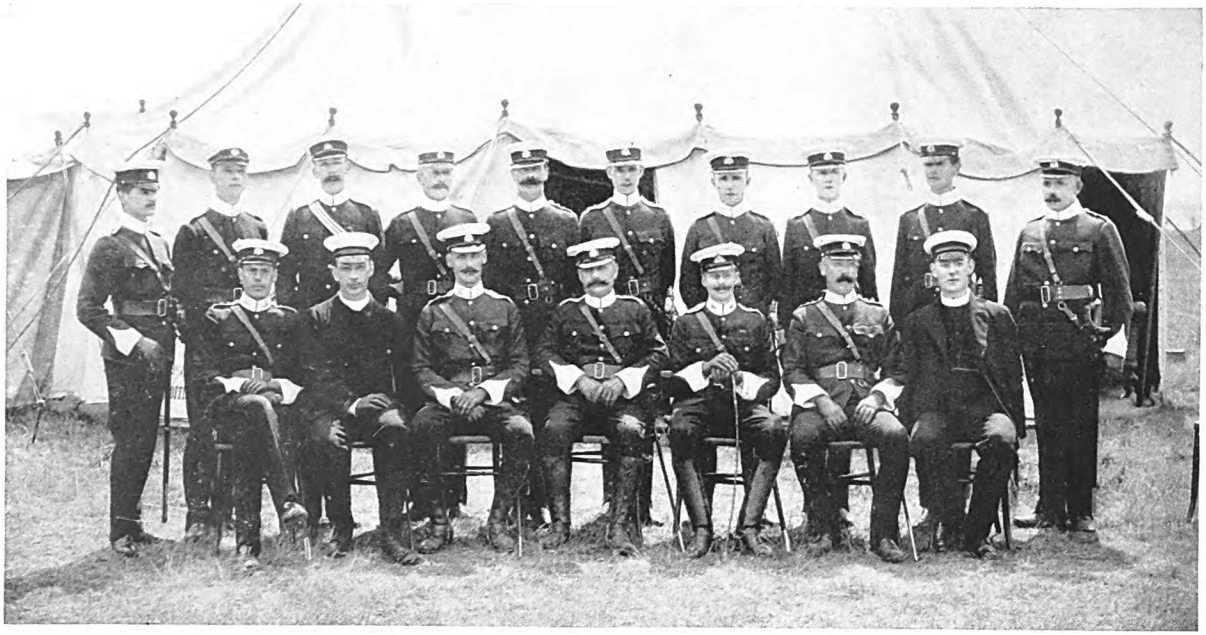
By the end of 1907 most of the County Associations, which were to be responsible for the conduct of the Force, had been formed.

Some few changes in the nomenclature and allocation of units were made and the 3rd V.B., originally the 1st Administrative Battalion Bedfordshire Rifle Volunteers, and the 4th (Hunts) V.B. Bedfordshire Regt., became amalgamated as Headquarters, and four companies of the 5th Bn. The Bedfordshire Regt. (T.F.), with headquarters in Gwyn Street, Bedford. The Bedfordshire Territorial Force Association, as originally constituted, was as follows: *President:* The Lord St. John of Bletsoe, J.P. (Lord Lieutenant). *Chairman:* Lieut.-Colonel the Right Hon. Lord Ampthill, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., 3rd Bn.

Digitized by Google



Digitized by Google



PL. V.] OFFICERS 3RD V.B. BEDFORDSHIRE REGIMENT. [*D* 39

SHORNCLIFFE CAMP, 1904.

Left to Right (*Standing*) : Lieut. F. Hipwell, Capt. Vipan, Capt. Holmes (M.O.), Capt. R. R. B. Orlebar, Capt. F. P. Du Santoy, Capt. H. P. Green, Capt. E. W. Brighten, 2nd-Lieut. C. H. F. Metcalfe, 2nd-Lieut. G. P. Orr, Lieut. and Q.M. Plummer.

Seated : Capt. Wilkinson, The Rev. W. C. C. Baker, Major G. P. Mills, Major J. Hills, Capt. and Adjt. Frankland, Capt. H. C. Brown, The Rev. Barber.

Digitized by Google

Bedfordshire Regt. *Vice-Chairman:* S. H. Whitbread, Esq., M.P., D.L., J.P. *Military Members:* Major H. W. Barnes, Unattached List (T.F.); Lieut.-Colonel E. F. Blindloss, Eastern Mounted Brigade Field Ambulance; Captain E. Brighten, 5th Bn. Bedfordshire Regt.; Lieut.-Colonel Lord Compton, D.S.O., Bedfordshire Yeomanry; Major C. P. Hall, Bedfordshire Yeomanry; Captain F. Hipwell, 5th Bn. Bedfordshire Regt.; Lieut.-Colonel G. Howard, 1st East Anglian Division (R.E.); Lieut.-Colonel S. Jackson, 5th Bn. Bedfordshire Regt.; Captain R. R. B. Orlebar, 5th Bn. Bedfordshire Regt.; Major the Hon. S. C. Peel, Bedfordshire Yeomanry; Major the Hon. W. R. W. Peel, Bedfordshire Yeomanry; Colonel F. Shuttleworth, Bedfordshire Yeomanry; Major G. H. Wells, 1st East Anglian Field Company (R.E.). *Representative Members: County Council*—Colonel His Grace the Duke of Bedford, K.G., A.D.C., late 3rd Bn. Bedfordshire Regt.; H. Cumberland, Esq.; *Boroughs*—The Mayor for the time being (Luton), F. T. Garrett, Esq. (Dunstable), Lieut.-Colonel R. P. Jarvis, V.D., late 3rd V.B. Bedfordshire Regt. (Bedford). *Co-opted Members:* W. H. Allen, Esq., J.P., Lieut.-Colonel A. Carruthers, V.D., late 3rd V.B. Bedfordshire Regt., H. T. Eve, Esq., F. Pym, Esq., D.L., J.P., J. Smith, Esq. *Secretary:* J. F. Badger Moody, Esq.

The troops administered by the Bedfordshire Territorial Force Association were the Bedfordshire Yeomanry (Lieut.-Colonel Lord Compton, D.S.O.), East Anglian Divisional R.E. (Lieut.-Colonel E. Howard), 1st East Anglian Field Company R.E. (Major G. H. Wells), 2nd East Anglian Field Company R.E. (Major A. B. Steinmetz), East Anglian Divisional Telegraph Company (Captain R. Wilson), 5th Bn. The Bedfordshire Regt. (Lieut.-Colonel Spenser Jackson), and the Eastern Mounted Brigade Field Ambulance (Lieut.-Colonel E. F. Blindloss).

Recruiting for the new Force was a somewhat puzzling business in the early days. Some counties recruited numbers largely in excess of the strength of their former

Digitized by Google

Volunteer units, others, especially in the larger cities, and notably London, fell far short of their establishments. The 5th Bedfords in 1909 numbered 24 officers and 738 N.C.O.'s and men, as against their proper Peace Establishment of 29 officers and 980 other ranks.

On the other hand, it must be remembered that, although the Territorial Force was recruited primarily for service at home, individuals, or whole corps, were permitted to volunteer for service abroad in war if called upon, and that shortly before the Great War came some eighty per cent of the 5th Bn. The Bedfordshire Regt. had accepted this overseas obligation.

Individual units had their ups and downs, and the spring of 1914 found the 5th Bedfords in the throes of an intensive recruiting campaign, which was very materially forwarded by some words spoken by Colonel de Winton, Brigadier of the East Midland Brigade, who delivered a lecture to A Company at Bedford.

Upon that occasion Colonel de Winton warned his audience that war with Germany was inevitable, and that it was up to the Territorials to be prepared. It would be such a war, he said, as would demand the services of peer's son and ploughman alike. "In short," said he, "every mother's son of you will be called upon to fight before the coming war is ended."

Those words of warning carried the very breath of conviction with them. They were spread broadcast by all who had heard them; the position of the 5th Battalion was materially improved thereby, and on 1st July 1914, the strength return showed 24 officers and 936 other ranks on the roll.

When war was declared the British Army was composed of the Regulars, Special Reserve and Territorial Force. Establishments were quickly made up and the Territorial Force commenced the formation of duplicate units, while the regimental depots and surplus reserves of the Regular Army and Special Reserve provided the nucleus of the New Armies. Apart from these normal expansions the

Digitized by Google

history of 1859 repeated itself, and there was a widespread effort throughout the land to prepare, by voluntary military training, to meet the possibility of invasion.

From August to November 1914 the new type of Volunteers were without official status. In the latter month, however, the Government placed them under the administrative control of the Central Association Volunteer Training Corps, with the late General Sir O'Moore Creagh, V.C., at the head, and in March 1916 the King invited Lords Lieutenant of Counties to submit offers from corps willing to enrol under the Volunteer Act of 1863. A new Volunteer Act was passed in 1916, and in January 1917 it was decided to form Special Sections of the Volunteer Force. In June 1918 Special Service Companies of the " Grey-green " Volunteers, formed for a limited period of two months whole-time service, replaced the personnel of T.F. Cyclists on the East Coast, but the total of 484 officers and 7,777 other ranks so employed was far short of actual requirements.

Mention should be made of the two battalions of Volunteers raised in Bedfordshire, with headquarters at Bedford and Luton respectively. Both had large numbers of ex-members of the old 3rd V.B. Bedfordshire Regt. in their ranks.

One important matter remains to be dealt with before closing the pre-war history of the Battalion.

Up to 1912 the 5th Bedfords had not carried Colours but in that year Mr. Alexander Alston, of The Tofte, Sharnbrook, whose family have been settled in the county since 1598, and members of which have taken various parts in the defence of the country, very generously provided the Battalion with King's and Regimental Colours, which were made at the School of Art Needlework, South Kensington.

Mr. Alston had attended a recruiting meeting at the Drill Hall in Bedford some time previously, and on hearing from the platform that the Battalion was under strength something like 400, had got up and said that if the necessary

Digitized by Google

numbers were forthcoming he would gladly present the Battalion with Colours as an incentive.

The King's Colour is the Union throughout, with the title of the Regiment in gold letters on a crimson centre, according to regulation, and the Crown over. The number of the Battalion is represented by a large V. The Regimental Colour is white, with the red cross of St. George throughout. The red and white rose is the only emblem on the Regimental Colour ; a wreath of roses, thistles, and shamrock on the same stalk encircle the Regimental Number, as was authorised for the 16th Foot by a warrant of George II, dated July 1754. The Colour, when presented, bore the Battle Honour " South Africa, 1900–2," to which many others have since been added.

The presentation took place before a large assembly in Bedford Park on the afternoon of 20th June 1912, when the ceremony was performed by Field-Marshal Lord Methuen, G.C.B., G.C.V.O., C.M.G., in perfect weather on the anniversary of Queen Victoria's accession to the throne.

Detachments were present representing the 1st (Herts) V.B. Bedfordshire Regt., 4th V.B. Northamptonshire Regt., East Anglian R.E., Bedfordshire Yeomanry and the O.T.C. Contingents of Bedford School and Bedford Modern School.

The 5th Bedfords at that time consisted of six Bedfordshire companies, lettered A to F, and two Huntingdonshire companies lettered G and H. Lieut.-Colonel Spenser Jackson had been recently appointed Honorary Colonel of the Battalion, which was commanded by Lieut.-Colonel F. N. Butler, with Captain V. A. Gillam as his Adjutant. Capt. Wright was Quartermaster and the Rev. W. W. C. Baker, Chaplain. The Company Officers were as follows :—

A Company (Bedford)	... Captain T. Wellesley Taylor and Lieutenant F. J. Harrington.
B Company (Luton)	... Major E. W. Brighten, 2nd-Lieutenants Shoosmith and Brandreth.

Digitized by Google

C Company (Luton) ...	... Captain J. Clutton, Lieutenants Norris and Webb, and 2nd-Lieutenants Cumberland and Simeons.
D Company (Biggleswade)	... 2nd-Lieutenant Smythe.
E Company (Ampthill)	... Captain J. W. Taylor.
F Company (Luton)	... Captain Metcalfe and 2nd-Lieutenant Denston.
G Company (Peterboro')	... Major E. R. Herbert, Lieutenants Hill, Warwick, Batten and Rowe.
H Company (Fletton, Hunts)	Captain S. Cook and 2nd-Lieutenant Thornhill.

The Colour Party consisted of Lieutenant F. J. Harrington (King's Colour), Lieutenant Hill (Regimental Colour), Colour-Sergeants Odell and Hall and Sergeant F. C. Scott.

At 2 p.m. Field-Marshal Lord Methuen arrived by car, accompanied by Mr. Alston, whose guest he had been at The Tofte, Sharnbrook. A guard of Lancers and Riflemen was drawn up at the outskirts of the town and acted as escort to the Park, where the Battalion, with fixed bayonets, was drawn up on three sides of a square.

The Field-Marshal was received with a General Salute, and then the Colours were brought up from the rear by the two Colour-Sergeants and placed on the piled drums, the King's Colour on the right and the Regimental Colour on the left. They were then consecrated by the Chaplain-General to the Forces, accompanied by the Chaplain to the Battalion.

After the consecration Field-Marshal Lord Methuen presented the Colours, and addressed the Battalion in words which were prophetic of the stern times ahead; then followed a March Past in Quarter Column.

Digitized by Google

the shopkeepers of a neighbouring town, who were only too willing to buy, since rumours of a food shortage already prevailed. There still remained the bacon to deal with. This the Quartermaster sold to several of the workmen on Earl Brownlow's Ashridge estate, where the Battalion was in camp.

Another problem which confronted the Quartermaster was that of how to deal with some eight tons of Battalion property at such short notice. It had been brought to Ashridge from Headquarters by a contractor, and he had been engaged to take it back upon the following Saturday. By dint of much telegraphing and telephoning however he was persuaded to fetch it away at once.

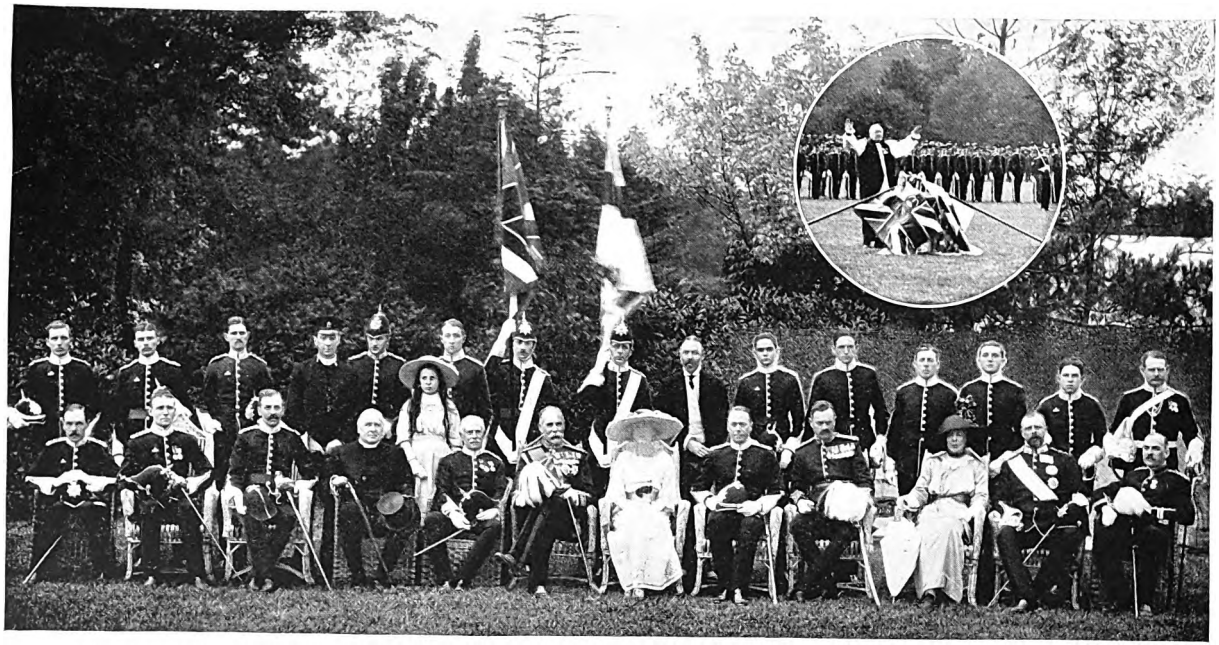
In the meantime the Quartermaster-Sergeant was dispatched to Bedford, where he made very efficient arrangements for the feeding of the Battalion at the Gwyn Street Drill Hall.

The men arrived back at their homes fully conscious of the fact that they had, at the most, but a few days left in which to put their private affairs in order.

Despite the obvious gravity of the situation it is significant of the atmosphere, engendered by so long a reign of peace as Great Britain had enjoyed, that when the actual order to mobilise arrived in the Orderly Room at the old Headquarters in Gwyn Street, Bedford, on 4th March, at about 6 p.m., the Adjutant, Captain H. Younghusband, who was discussing the situation with 2nd-Lieut. W. S. Chirnside, decided that it would be best to check the accuracy of the message by putting through a telephone call to the Headquarters of the 4th Northamptonshire Regt., who confirmed the fact that they also had received a similar telegram ordering immediate mobilisation.

The method of mobilisation was by personal telegram to each officer and by notices to individual Territorial soldiers. These official notices to join had always been kept in readiness and on them was stated the time and place at which the men were to report.

Digitized by Google



PL. VI.] PRESENTATION OF KING'S AND REGIMENTAL COLOURS. [*D* 50

BEDFORD PARK, 20TH JUNE, 1912.

Inset: Bishop Taylor Smith (Chaplain-General to H.M. Forces), consecrating the Colours.

The Presentation Group (left to right, standing): Lieut. Warwick, Lieut. W. R. T. Brandreth, Capt. J. W. Taylor, the Rev. W. W. C. Baker (Chaplain), Capt. V. A. Gillam (Adjutant, the Yorks and Lancs. Regt.), Miss Agatha Spenser Jackson, Capt. C. H. Metcalfe, Lieut. F. J. Harrington (King's Colour), Lieut. J. E. Hill (Regimental Colour), A. R. Alston, Esq. (Donor of the Colours), Lieut. Rowe, Lieut. B. C. Cumberland, Lieut. R. M. Smythe, Lieut. E. E. Simeons, Lieut. J. K. Batten, Major the Hon. H. Glyn, M.P. (A.D.C. to Lord Methuen). *Seated:* Capt. J. Clutton, Major E. W. Brighten, Major E. R. Herbert (Second-in-Command), Bishop Taylor Smith (Chaplain-General H.M.F.), Lieut.-Col. Spenser Jackson, T.D., D.L. (Hon. Colonel), Field-Marshal Lord Methuen, G.C.B., G.C.V.O., C.M.G., Mrs. Alex. Alston, Lieut.-Col. F. N. Butler (Commanding Officer), Major-General the Hon. J. H. G. Byng, C.B., M.V.O. (G.O.C., East Anglian Division), Mrs. Butler, The Rt. Hon. Lord Ampthill, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., Colonel C. de Winton (Commanding East Midland Brigade).

Digitized by Google

ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

Digitized by Google

As the mobilisation ordered was general, the Adjutant dispatched 2nd-Lieut. Chirnside post haste in his car to see that mobilisation notices were duly posted up in the adjacent villages. No pains were spared to see that the men were duly notified, since failure to report on mobilisation is a most serious crime, to be treated either as " desertion " or " absence without leave," either of which offence is punishable by Court Martial.

On his return to Bedford, Chirnside was instructed to make arrangements for the accommodation of the officers at the Bridge, Lion and Swan Hotels. Meanwhile the old Roller Skating Rink, which is now the Plaza Picture Palace, and the Goldington Road and Priory Street Schools had been requisitioned as quarters for the men.

Owing to the vigorous recruiting campaign which had been carried out in the previous May and June the Battalion was very nearly up to full strength. Upon reporting, in accordance with mobilisation orders, the personnel of the Battalion was medically inspected. Those passed fit immediately received such mobilisation equipment as was available and the gratuity on embodiment. Thereafter everyone's pay and conditions of service became exactly the same as those obtaining in the Regular Army. Such matters remained to be dealt with as the issue of identity discs and S.A.A., the sharpening of bayonets and the preparation for each N.C.O. and man of a Soldier's Pay Book on active service, and identity certificates for wives and children to allow the soldier to make allotments of his pay, besides such other matters as the issue of Field Service rations and blankets.

At that time infantry battalions of the Territorial Force still preserved the old eight companies formation and the composition of the 5th Bedfords was as follows :—

HEADQUARTERS

Commanding Officer : Lieut.-Colonel F. N. Butler
Second-in-Command : Major E. W. Brighten
Adjutant : Captain H. Younghusband
Quartermaster : Lieut. E. Kiddle
Transport Officer : 2nd-Lieut. E. V. Andreini

Digitized by Google

Sergeant-Major : R.S.M. E. Mendham
Quartermaster-Sergeant : E. T. Odell
Orderly-Room Clerk : S. Stratford
Sergeant-Drummer : W. J. Emmerton
Sergeant-Cook : F. Thurley
Transport Sergeant : P. Steff
Sergeant Shoemaker: W. Moreing
Pioneer Sergeant : — Draper
Signalling Sergeant : — Dunmore

ATTACHED

Medical Officer : Major J. B. McBride, R.A.M.C. (T.F.)

MACHINE GUN SECTION

Machine Gun Officer : 2nd-Lieut. F. S. Shoosmith
Machine Gun Sergeant : T. Holt

COMPANIES' HEADQUARTERS

A Company, Bedford : Capt. J. W. Taylor
B Company, Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard : Capt. C. H. F. Metcalfe
C Company, Luton : Major J. Clutton
D Company, Biggleswade : Lieut. R. M. Smythe
E Company, Ampthill : Lieut. R. Forrest
F Company, Luton : Lieut. B. C. Cumberland
G Company, Luton : Capt. J. E. Hill
H Company, Bedford : Capt. W. K. Meakin.

Despite the fact that the Battalion was living in entirely strange conditions, and that the men were sleeping on the unbelievably hard boards of schoolroom floors, everybody was in the highest spirits, since there was a general expectation that the 54th Division, to which the 5th Bedfords belonged, would be ordered at any moment to get ready to join the Expeditionary Force in France.

One of the duties of the County Territorial Association in peace had been to insure that sufficient transport animals would be available in case of war. In point of fact the impossibility of making the full necessary arrangements of such a nature had already been proved. But the Territorials of that time were nothing if they were not resourceful. Lieut. E. V. Andreini certainly proved himself a most efficient and ingenious Regimental Transport

Digitized by Google

Officer and the way he commandeered horses for the Battalion, literally from between the shafts, must have caused surprise, if not a little consternation, in the minds of a fair number of Bedfordshire people. Extra conveyances were needed also, and among those requisitioned were sprinkler water carts and vans with the names and trades of their former owners still showing conspicuously upon them.

War equipment is either " personal," namely, all that a man carries outside his clothes, except his arms; or " regimental," that is to say, everything else that is required to equip a unit for service in the field; and although every detail, from the appointed war station of the Battalion, down to the names of the officers who would draw the men's pay from the local banks, had been arranged, mobilisation still necessitated the requisitioning of a good deal of stuff from the Army Ordnance Department, Army Clothing Department, and Army Veterinary Department, while it was the duty of the County Territorial Association to find the necessary equipment for its three Field Ambulances. There was also the matter of bringing the Battalion up to its War Establishment of Headquarters, 8 Companies and Machine Gun Section, comprising 29 officers, 980 other ranks, making a total of 1,009 all ranks, excluding the Medical Officer.

Instead of proceeding at once to join the Expeditionary Force in France, the first move of the Battalion was by train to Romford in Essex.

The departure from Bedford was marked by scenes of great enthusiasm and emotion; but it had also its humorous side.

When the transport arrived at Bedford railway station it was found that one of the commandeered wagons was too big for the railway gauge. Andreini, resourceful as ever, gave orders that the vehicle should be cut in two, but still it proved too wide. The Adjutant issued peremptory orders to the Transport Officer and the Quartermaster to go out and get another conveyance of some kind. There

Digitized by Google

was no money available to buy a vehicle, no one seemed disposed to present one to the Battalion, and, as the train was about to start, these two much harassed officers conceived the bright notion of impressing a coal lorry, which was standing in the station yard. This was hurriedly loaded on to a truck and the last thing the Transport Officer and Quartermaster saw as the train steamed out of Bedford Station was the infuriated owner, who had arrived too late to save his lorry, left upon the platform shaking his fist and cursing with anger and dismay. Unfortunately, the zeal of Andreini and Kiddle did not commend itself to higher authority, and, at a later period, there was voluminous correspondence with the War Office. This correspondence lasted until October 1915, by which time the Battalion was on the Eastern Front, despite which circumstance both officers had to attend a Board of Enquiry and to give their version of the affair.

Fresh troubles awaited the Transport Officer at Romford.

It was getting late when the Battalion marched into its new quarters, and the necessary pegs for picketing out the horses could not be found. Therefore the animals were let loose in a field and, throughout that night, the unhappy Transport Officer lay in his bed at a farm listening to the thunder of hoofs and the anxious neighing of fifty-seven strange horses as they galloped round and round the field until dawn broke. All would have been well, but for the fact that one animal had broken a leg and therefore had to be destroyed. This, also, led to much correspondence at a later date, for although a Board of Enquiry accepted the circumstances of the animal's demise, no directions were given as to the disposal of the carcase; Andreini, however, was still full of bright ideas and had the inspiration of selling the carcase to a horse slaughterer for £1. But when he tried to hand the money over to Captain Younghusband, the Adjutant would have none of it, but told him to give it to the Quartermaster, as the meat department was in his line. The Quartermaster accepted this donation to the Fourpenny Messing Account, but he

Digitized by Google

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
A L

Digitized by Google

1

2

3

4

5

PL. VII.] COMMANDING OFFICERS, 1912–1928. [*E* 51

1. Lieut.-Col. F. N. Butler, T.D. (6th Commanding Officer), 1912–1915. 2. Lieut.-Col. E. W. Brighten, C.M.G., D.S.O., T.D. (7th Commanding Officer), 1915–1920. 3. Lieut.-Col. J. Clutton, T.D. (8th Commanding Officer), 1920–23. 4. Lieut.-Col. Sir H. A. Wernher, K.C.V.O. (9th Commanding Officer), 1924–28. 5. Lieut.-Col. C. H. Miskin, M.C. (10th Commanding Officer), 1928 *et seq.*

Digitized by Google

little suspected the amount of trouble he was storing up for himself.

At Romford the Battalion resumed the training which had been interrupted by the breaking up of the annual camp. Re-organisation now took place, and various promotions were made to complete the establishment of officers and N.C.O.'s.

Every officer and man went armed to the teeth, as it was understood that the Battalion was already on active service. It was, in fact, only when the inevitable accident, luckily not of a fatal nature, occurred in crowded billets that the men's ammunition was withdrawn. There were, of course, the usual rumours that the place was infested with German spies, and one day, when the Battalion cooks were preparing a meal in the school yard, a man, with a distinctly Teutonic cast of countenance, was observed looking over a wall at their proceedings. One of the Company Commanders promptly ordered his arrest; but investigation proved him to be a perfectly inoffensive local baker, who was wishful of giving a little friendly and expert advice to the cooks.

At that period it was difficult to find adequate accommodation for officers and men, and all ranks found it far from easy to get proper baths. The P.R.I. and M.O., however, solved the problem, so far as they themselves were concerned, by making their ablutions in a sink fitted up in the laboratory attached to the school in which the troops were billeted.

At Romford the Battalion was first asked to sign on for foreign service, and as the response was entirely adequate the 5th Bedfords were placed upon the list for overseas.

Rumours, apparently well authenticated, were rife that the Division would shortly proceed to the Suez Canal, where a certain amount of fighting was taking place. Numerous people had " seen " sun-helmets in the Quartermaster's Stores; but it was undoubtedly the tale told by a recruit, who swore to having heard camels grunting in the transport lines, that first led his comrades to doubt the

Digitized by Google

authenticity of the alleged orders, which were, in reality, never issued.

One can well imagine that Andreini, at least, was thankful that he had no camels to look after, for even after he had got the pegs and was able to picket out his horses properly there were still "incidents." For example, whilst the Battalion was in Divisional Camp he one day observed a first line transport driver who was running hard and holding a horse by the mane, until he was finally caught by an enraged farm hand who promptly deprived him of the animal. Upon asking the driver what he was doing with the horse Andreini received the disgusted answer: "Well, you know, sir, we lost one at Romford. Another five yards and I should have got this one. The farmer would never have recognised him, once we'd got him mixed up with the other horses."

Whilst the Battalion was at Romford the £5 bounties were paid out and it was amusing to see the various ways in which the men expended the money. One sergeant, who shall be nameless, returned from London in a taxi, smoking such a large and expensive cigar that the Guard, thinking he must be at least a General Officer, turned out and presented arms.

In due course the Battalion left Romford and commenced the series of route marches whereby it ultimately reached its appointed War Station at Bury St. Edmunds in Suffolk.

Before setting out on this trek a covered wagon was purchased to convey the Officers' Mess kit, and various sundries not allowed for in Government transport. That column was a curious sight, for all sorts of vehicles had been impressed by the supply officer. There were farm carts, carts with high sides, carts with low sides, carts with no sides at all, *and* the coal lorry. What an acquisition that coal lorry was! It provided two wheels more than were actually allowed, but this extra wheelage did not last long, for one of the spring carts broke down.

In those days both the Transport Officer and Quartermaster were gaining invaluable experience. Carts supplied

Digitized by Google

to carry 11 cwt., were found, with much care in the blocking up of springs, to be capable of taking 6 cwt. This left 5 cwt. to be disposed of on already overloaded vehicles. Then there was the trouble of wheels running hot with no wheel cap spanners or grease.

It was here that Andreini's inventive genius was again made manifest. His perfect perspicacity was, indeed, admired by all. Grease and spanners galore cropped up from nowhere; new pieces of leather to repair harness; in fact, there seemed to be a never failing supply of all necessaries. This greatly surprised the officer intimately connected with him in this department. This surprise was only equalled by the corresponding shock when the bills afterwards rolled up at Bury St. Edmunds. One account was addressed to "The Officer with the fair moustache in charge of the horses." It was, in fact, not necessary to use a map to trace the Battalion's line of march. The route was all too plainly indicated by the post marks on the envelopes containing the bills which came in from every place that had been passed through. One tradesman, when asked to give the name of the purchasing officer, replied that although he was unable to comply with this request the goods had been delivered to a rather short gentleman with twinkling eyes, who was continually tapping his riding boot with his whip. There was no difficulty in identifying the unfortunate Transport Officer, who, having no option in the matter, promptly signed the chit.

When 2nd-Lieut. C. H. Miskin succeeded 2nd-Lieut. Andreini as Transport Officer, the officer most intimately associated with them has stated in confidence that he is perfectly certain that no battalion has ever been blessed with two successive Transport Officers who could more ably "wangle" from an unsophisticated Quartermaster extras not allowed for in the regulations. Fortunately, the weather was exceptionally kind to the 5th Bedfords on the 100 miles trek from Romford to Bury St. Edmunds. The men, at that period of their training, were by no means

Digitized by Google

yet accustomed to the weight of a full pack and equipment, and they suffered a good deal from other causes.

New boots had, of necessity, been issued to most of the men, and it will never be forgotten how doggedly they trudged along although suffering intense pain. On the first stage of the march the Battalion covered twelve miles from Romford to Braintree, no great distance, in comparison with what they did later on, but quite far enough for stiff, thirsty and foot-sore novices.

Very soon after the Battalion had moved off it was painfully obvious that the men were experiencing trouble from their new boots, whereupon the C.O. conferred with the M.O., who suggested that an officer should ride ahead to Braintree, and, if possible, purchase some galvanised iron baths. When the Battalion arrived they found a dozen 30 in. baths awaiting them, and poured blessings upon the head of a considerate C.O., as they soaked their blistered feet. These foot baths became quite a regimental institution and were in great demand during the endurance training at Bury St. Edmunds.

Despite the fatigues of their first experience of day in and day out route marching, many a man retained pleasant recollections of that long trek between English summer hedgerows long after, when it came to the grim horrors of the rabbit-wire road, which stretched across the Palestine desert. Khaki was new to England in those days and the troops were cheered with a wholehearted fervour, which spoke well for the patriotism of the people, and especially the children, who turned out to see the soldiers as they tramped through the villages and towns.

History does not record where on the march to Bury an unsophisticated subaltern enquired if they could not have a change from bacon and eggs for breakfast. The prompt reply to which was: " Yes, you can have eggs and bacon."

Before the seventy-five miles to Long Melford were covered the weather broke and every one reached that town with a wet shirt to his back. Arrangements were

Digitized by Google

made, however, for clothing to be dried in a malting and the laughter with which the men set about getting their kit ship-shape again indicated clearly that they were rapidly developing into campaigners. The officers were in no better case than the men, but they, too, were acquiring a good deal of the old soldier's artfulness. As many as could do so, slept in the Mess Cart, and those who could not squeeze in rigged ground sheets over the wheels and thus contrived comparatively comfortable sleeping quarters underneath.

Here Andreini, at his own request, rejoined his Company, 2nd-Lieut. C. H. Miskin succeeding him as Transport Officer. By this time, incidentally, the Transport had acquired a mascot, in the shape of a goat.

The march to Bury was not continuous. Each night the Battalion bivouacked, the officers sleeping under their waterproof sheets, supported, as a rule, by a broom stick cut in half with cord stretched between the two poles ; the remainder of the Battalion turned in by pairs under their smaller sheets, strung together and supported by rifles, wood or any other odds and ends that could be picked up. At Long Melford the Battalion went into special training for some weeks, when particular attention was paid to musketry, and some features of soldiering, which were new to Territorials, were introduced, such as moving in artillery formation, digging trenches and the use of the entrenching tool.

In due course, however, the 5th Bedfords reached their appointed War Station at Bury St. Edmunds. There the medically unfit and the men who, for various reasons, had to be left out of the Active Service Battalion were separated from the main body and formed into a composite company under the command of Captain J. W. Taylor. This Company trained and lived in a separate district of its own. On one occasion, the Service Battalion having gone on a training scheme and being inspected by a General who was not aware of the existence of the composite company, an amusing incident occurred.

Digitized by Google

As the General, accompanied by his Staff, was riding back from the inspection he was surprised to see a body of Bedfords apparently carrying out a route march. He called upon them to halt and addressed himself to the officer in charge.

"What regiment are you?"

"The Bedfords, sir," answered the officer in charge.

"But the Bedfords should all have been present at my inspection," expostulated the General.

"But we are the composite company, sir."

"What the devil do you mean? How many companies are there in a battalion?"

"Eight, sir."

"Very well, what are you?"

"The ninth, sir!"

And history relates that the General departed pondering, but unsatisfied.

As soon as the Battalion was settled down to intensive training at Bury, it would seem that the newly-appointed Transport Officer began to cudgel his brains as to how best he could live up to the standard of what a Transport Officer should be, which had been set at a high level by his predecessor. As the Quartermaster said, it is common knowledge that it was easier to say "Yes" at once to any of the new T.O.'s blandishments, as, by persistent applications, his desire would have to be fulfilled in the long run. As an instance, wash-leathers, sponges, harness paste and even metal polish were purchased. How they were paid for will be related further on. History has it, moreover, that when asked sarcastically upon one occasion if he would not like some scent for his blooming horses, Miskin replied instantly: "No, but I could do with some soft soap for the brown harness"—*and* he got it.

So far a good many tales have been told against the Transport, but the Transport Officers have, themselves, one or two yarns to pitch about the Quartermaster!

Kiddle, whose fondness for practical joking was proverbial, once went to a local theatre in the early days

Digitized by Google

of the war. As he, together with some boon companions, entered a box the audience were still clapping the previous turn. Kiddle took all the applause to himself and stepping to the front of the box bowed right and left. The audience, taking him, no doubt, for some person of great military importance, broke out into loud and prolonged cheers; whereupon the Quartermaster made a brief, but eloquent speech, thanking them for their reception, and, no doubt, the majority of those present went home fully satisfied that they had paid due tribute to one in whose hands the military destiny of the nation rested.

The trouble caused by the new boots has been mentioned already. This matter exercised the mind of the M.O. to such an extent that at last he decided to deliver a lecture upon the care of the feet. Among various methods he advocated for protecting them was that of soaping the socks. One zealous young officer listened carefully and took fully to heart all that Major McBride had to say. The next morning this youth entered the bathroom, and, seeing what he believed to be the socks that his batman had laid out for him, proceeded to soap them thoroughly. Unfortunately, it was the Colonel's orderly who had laid out those socks and just as the soaping operation was finished to the subaltern's satisfaction the C.O. arrived in person. The rest of that story is best veiled in discreet silence.

There was still a general belief that the war would be over by Christmas and all ranks were fearing that they would not get the chance of a smack at the enemy at all. It was, however, pointed out to them very clearly that it was absolutely necessary for them to fit themselves in every possible way before they could be sent overseas to meet such very efficient troops as those possessed by Germany.

There was not only the question of training, there was also to be considered the matter of the completion of kit and equipment.

In those days of October and November 1914, it was harder to get uniforms than to take butter out of a dog's

Digitized by Google

mouth. All requisitions had to go to the County Association, and since every branch of the Service was clamouring for clothing, it was useless to think of trying to get anything out of Government contractors.

At last the uniforms arrived and from that moment onwards the Quartermaster was literally besieged by company officers, each one of whom had a special reason to advance as to why his company should be clothed first. As a compromise it was agreed that the worst cases in each company should be paraded to show the urgent necessity for new clothing. In some cases the need of actual covering was obvious. There had been other difficulties. The recruits from the Depot at an early period had invariably arrived without uniform, or, at least, without Service Dress. They turned up clad in parts of what was then known as "dress clothing." For instance, there were scarlet tunics, blue trousers with red stripes, and white belts. This all sounds very proper on paper; in reality their appearance was horrible, for it was no unusual sight to see a man wearing a scarlet tunic with a bowler hat and civilian trousers, or a man in brown boots, blue regimental trousers complete with red stripe, a sports coat, and a Field Service cap. The boot question was not quite so acute. At first the men were allowed to parade in their own boots and, provided they could produce boots of any sort to hand in, could obtain the issue of a new pair. This system soon broke down, when it was found that some men were drawing two pairs within a short period, having carefully searched surrounding refuse pits for old pairs to produce.

These vital matters having been settled, every company was paraded to see what shortages existed in equipment. Rifle slings and haversacks were the articles of which there was the greatest dearth, so an officer was sent to a well-known Army contractor to make up, as best he could, the shortage, so that there would be, at least, the right numbers of articles to place before a Condemning Board. During this period the Fourpenny Messing Allowance was

Digitized by Google

so cleverly managed that sufficient funds were provided to purchase timber from which tables were made at which the men fed, white enamel plates, mugs, a carving knife, fork and steel for each table and such additional comforts as helped the men to retain their self-respect and become better soldiers.

While the feeding and comfort of the troops were being attended to the animals were not forgotten.

There was plenty of hay, in fact, more than was required in hay form; but the Transport Officer suggested the purchase of a chaff-cutter for four pounds. The officer charged with the purchase of goods not supplied by the Government protested strongly, on the grounds that he did not see where the money was to come from. Then was evolved a scheme that would make the finest system of hire purchase fade into insignificance. In the end the chaff-cutter was purchased on credit, but it was eventually paid for, and so was a shoeing forge, and many other things, which were undoubtedly for the benefit of the Transport Section. This is how it was done. Up to that time the Government issue of straw, after being used in the stable, had been given to any civilian who cared to cart it away; but, henceforth, the used straw was put into a heap and after a short time sold as a marketable commodity. Thus, the various extras were paid for and the Transport Officer earned praise from every one, for the smart turn-out of the Battalion Transport.

At one time, while the Battalion was at Bury, it was remarked that there was a suspicious shortage of food in the Officers' Mess. Joints had a habit of appearing only once at table, until the day when a certain officer returned unexpectedly from parade and met a good lady coming from the vicinity of the Mess with a perambulator. With the remark: "I am very fond of children," he whipped the cover off the pram and there lay a good part of a ham. "Good heavens," said the officer, "what a bald head your baby has!" There was no shortage after that!

The officers found various ways of amusing themselves

Digitized by Google

in the evenings. Among many other stunts will be remembered the famous pyramid and the dancing troupe; but the Fire Brigade, their *pièce de résistance*, was usually kept for guest nights. Shortly after dinner, and while every one was still sitting over the smokes and port, a huge flame would shoot up alarmingly just outside the windows of the Mess. This fire was supplied by a file of papers which one of the Mess waiters had been instructed to light. With a realistic shout of "Fire!" most of the junior officers would spring to their appointed places. One seized the poker, another a shovel, but most of them grabbed soda water syphons and before the wretched guest could realise the joke he was half drowned with soda water, seized and bound, and lowered out of the window. This all went on in impenetrable darkness, under cover of which the senior officers discreetly retired, as soon as the lights were put out. Needless to add, a good deal of clothing, but not the spirits of the wearers, was damped before the "fire" was finally extinguished.

In September 1914 it was found necessary to form a Second Line unit, and the 5th (Reserve) Battalion, later to be known as the 2/5th Battalion, came into being. The nucleus of this new Battalion was provided from the original 5th Bedfords.

It was at Bury St. Edmunds that the Sergeants' Mess was reformed, and there, too, Lieut.-Colonel F. N. Butler left the First Line unit, of which Major E. W. Brighten assumed the command, with Major C. H. F. Metcalfe acting as Second-in-Command. The latter officer did not, however, stay long with the Battalion, which he left to take up a Staff appointment. Lieut.-Colonel F. N. Butler proceeded to France subsequently, and during a part of 1917 was in temporary command of the 1st Bn. The Bedfordshire Regt.

In November 1914 the Battalion was reorganised into four double companies. Lieut.-Colonel Brighten was then in command, with Captain Younghusband still serving as Adjutant, and R.S.M. E. Mendham as Regimental-

Digitized by Google

Sergeant-Major. The company reorganisation was carried out as follows:—

B & C	Companies	became	A	Company	... Capt. B. C. Cumberland C.S.M., E. Odell
F & G	„	„	B	„	... Capt. J. E. Hill C.S.M., W. Brazier
A & H	„	„	C	„	... Capt. W. K. Meakin C.S.M., A. Milton
D & E	„	„	D	„	... Capt. R. M. Smythe C.S.M., W. Gobey.

Training was now proceeding rapidly and the words "Pole Targets" will revive many memories among the initiated. For the benefit of the uninitiated, it may be stated that "Pole Targets" were long figure targets, attached to poles which could be carried by two men. These targets represented, according to the occasion, and, some said, the caprice of the umpires, a company, a platoon or a battalion on field manœuvres. The situations may be imagined, which arose to perplex the young Company Commander who had advanced all day and manœuvred his men into an excellent position to deliver the final assault, only to find, to his consternation, that a couple of the enemy, bearing a pole target, had appeared through a hedge and he had now, apparently, a battalion enfilading his flank, or menacing his rear.

Men told off to represent imaginary forces also caused many amusing scenes, and Andreini, for one, will remember upon one occasion hearing a voice shouting: "You can't capture me; I'm an imaginary Machine Gun Section." The answer given on that occasion was, "Damn your imagination! We'll show you!" And two men picked up the protesting hero and dragged him away.

There is also a good tale told of certain Night Operations, when the C.O. burst into an hotel which was the Headquarters of a company, and, turning to the Company Commander, informed him that his position was surrounded and asked him what he made of the situation?

Back came the answer:

Digitized by Google

"I should think distinctly acute, but we may as well die happy. Won't you join us in a last drink, sir?"

Alarms were frequent in 1914, and on the occasion of the German naval raid upon Scarborough, when the Battalion was just marching out for a day's training, a message arrived, and seeing the senior officers dashing about word passed through the ranks that the Germans had landed. The Battalion at once returned to Headquarters, where ball ammunition was issued. After that the troops were hastily entrained. But two hours later they were detrained again. The danger was over!

Day by day, however, the Battalion became more efficient, but the chances of an early departure overseas were rendered distinctly less when the 1st Hertfords were taken from the Brigade in November 1914, to be brigaded with the Guards Brigade in France. This depletion was followed in February 1915 by the 1st Cambridgeshires also proceeding to the Western Front. These two Battalions were replaced in due course by the 10th and 11th Battalions The London Regt. The former hailed from Hackney, and the latter was a Rifle Regiment from Finsbury.

The monotony of training at Bury St. Edmunds was varied, to a certain extent, by Battalion cross-country runs. For this form of exercise the officers, N.C.O.'s and men were divided into ten packs according to their speed, and, on two days a week, no matter what the weather might be, indulged, appropriately dressed in sweaters and shorts, in runs of from five to ten miles. Each pack was started off five minutes after its predecessor and was kept together by its officers until within a mile of home, when every one ran as he pleased, the fastest and slowest men being promoted or relegated to other packs according to their ability.

Amusements at Bury St. Edmunds were not very varied, but it was a good game country, and the temptation to lift a free meal, in conjunction with a little sport, was undoubtedly too much for the lads at times, as tail feathers, protruding from the corner of packs, and bits of fur, sticking out suspiciously from bulging haversacks, bore witness.

Digitized by Google

No history of this period would be complete without some special mention of the hospitality extended by the Freemasons of Bury St. Edmunds to the Freemasons of the Battalion. The Masonic Lodge was opened to them as honorary members and a standing invitation was given to attend the Lodges. On one occasion a special evening was set aside for the attendance of the Masonic Brethren of the 5th Bedfordshire Regt., and no less than nine officers attended.

At last there came a real intimation that active service was drawing nearer. This took the shape of an instruction for all ranks below the age of seventeen to be sent down to the Second Line. After that, some of the men seemed to find it extraordinarily difficult to produce their birth certificates, and among all those who were destined to leave the Active Service Battalion there was a great sense of depression. It was hard luck, too, for most of the youngsters who had to go had already proved their ability to hump a pack and carry a rifle through the longest day's march with the hardiest of their comrades.

The gaps thus created in the ranks were filled with excellent recruits from the Depot and the Reserve Battalion. By a happy circumstance some of the lads who had been relegated to the Second Line actually rejoined the unit before it left England, and some of the others rejoined with drafts from time to time during the war.

Despite the recruit training they had received with the Second Line, the drafts on joining the First Line were put on the square for a few weeks under Sergeant-Instructor H. Munson, who was a most capable and energetic N.C.O., and rendered yeoman service to the Battalion during a difficult period. He was appointed Regimental-Sergeant-Major before the Battalion embarked for Gallipoli and, in the latter stages of the war, held the same rank in the 3/5th (Training) Battalion, from which he went, finally, to join the 1st Hertfords, as Regimental-Sergeant-Major in France.

Although all hope of an early move overseas seems to

Digitized by Google

have been abandoned for a time, there was ever fresh hope of some fighting to be found in the constant rumours that were current of a threatened invasion. Eventually, when a German landing was regarded as distinctly feasible, the Battalion was entrained and distributed at various points within striking distance of the East Coast. Arrived at their destination the Battalion dug reserve trenches, to the no small indignation of the local inhabitants, whose gardens were ruthlessly cut through and mangled. At Halesworth, however, C Company came in for a good time with all the inhabitants of the town, including the Rector, who lived in a beautiful old moated house, and placed his car at the disposal of the officers, doing their best for the comfort of the troops.

By Christmas 1914 the Battalion was back again at Bury St. Edmunds, and, thanks to their many friends in that town and also to their older friends at home in Bedfordshire, they were provided with the very best of Christmas fare.

The inhabitants of Bury were particularly good to the Bedfords, for they crowded themselves out of hearth and home to allow the lads to have their relatives to spend Christmas with them. A good deal of disappointment was experienced by those whose Christmas parcels failed to arrive, owing to the congested state of the mails.

The "incident" of the Headquarters Guard was amusing. For them the "spirits" of Christmas proved altogether too overpowering, and a horrified Orderly Officer saw the men approaching the parade ground for guard mounting with a very unsteady gait, which belied their unconcerned countenances. A deplorable attempt was made to fall in, but the position of attention proved altogether too much for the majority of the men to maintain, and, albeit reluctantly, the Orderly Officer ordered the men under arrest and had them marched to the Guard Room.

Despite the good time the Battalion had at Bury St. Edmunds orders for a move to Norwich on Easter Monday

Digitized by Google

by route march through Thetford and Attleborough were received with general acclamation. It was a very different Battalion of tough campaigners which marched out of Bury St. Edmunds to the half-trained novice soldiers who had marched into the town so many months before.

In the Norwich district lies the famous Mousehold Heath, which was to become so very familiar to the troops. It was the scene of many Night Operations, which, although popular with the men, did not prove nearly so pleasing to the local inhabitants, who, for generations past, have regarded this stretch of country as the particular preserve for courting couples.

By this time the Battalion was really shaping like an active service unit. The undersized recruits of a few months earlier had merged into grown men, through the medium of route marching and physical training, which had made them fit and strong. The whole Battalion was, in fact, now moving with an easy swing that spoke volumes to the old soldiers who understood such things. And very soon a rumour again became persistent that the Bedfords were going East. Every one was pleased, but, in point of fact, it did not particularly matter to them where they were to be sent, for, by this time, they were *pukka* soldiers, and, as such, ready for anything. This latest rumour, however, proved to be founded upon fact.

Before the Battalion proceeded overseas it was given a farewell march through its own county. This was an historical incident, due records of which will no doubt be preserved in the county archives for all time. Early on the morning of the Thursday appointed the Battalion fell in in full marching order, under Lieut.-Colonel E. W. Brighten and moved out of St. Albans, headed by its band and followed by the transport and field cookers. A halt was made in Costin's Field near Dunstable for dinner, and early in the afternoon the Battalion was given a great reception by the Mayor and townsfolk of Dunstable, which place had been specially decorated in honour of the occasion. That night was spent in bivouac at Houghton Regis and next day the

Digitized by Google

Battalion marched by way of Toddington, Westoning, Flitwick and Ampthill, cheered through every village and hamlet, to the county town.

At Bedford the Battalion was accorded a Civic Reception and addressed by the Mayor, Mr. H. Browning. Then followed a march through the town, which reminded the older inhabitants of the homecoming of the 1st Active Service Company of the Volunteers from the South African War. In a field adjoining the Depot of the Regiment at Kempston Barracks, a bivouac was pitched. Before night fell, however, the men marched past, the Duke of Bedford being present at the saluting base, with the Lord Lieutenant of the County, Mr. S. Howard Whitbread.

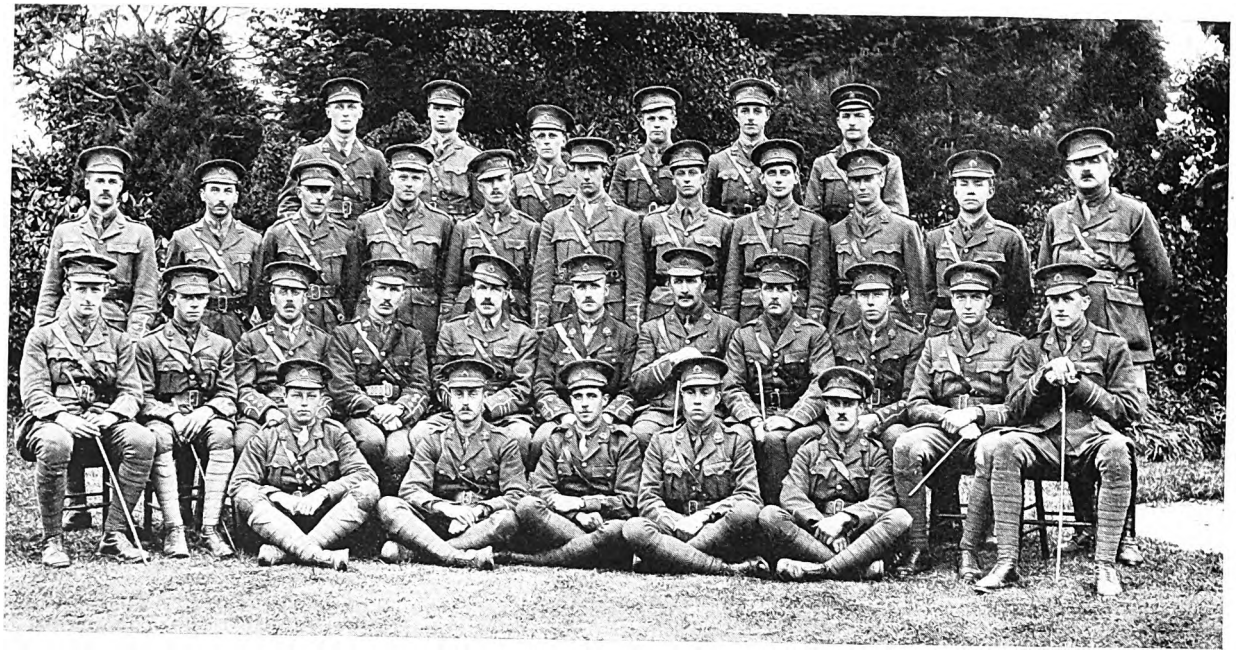
During that week the heat was intense and Reveille sounded early on Saturday morning, when the Battalion paraded and marched out at 6 a.m., proceeding through Clophill and Silsoe to Barton-in-the-Clay. The original intention had been for the Battalion to reach Wardown Park, Luton, by noon ; but the men had already undergone a trying time in grilling heat, and so the C.O. halted them at Barton at 10.30 a.m. and gave them a rest until 4.30 in the afternoon. This enabled them to reach Luton in good trim in time for yet another Civic Reception at 7 p.m.

The Battalion, as drawn up for the reception at Luton Town Hall, since destroyed by fire, numbered approximately 20 officers and 800 men. The remaining 15 officers and 200 men had been left behind in St. Albans to complete certain courses of instruction which could not be interrupted.

Scenes of enthusiasm, unparalleled in the history of Luton, marked the reception of the Battalion, which had not before been seen in the town as a complete unit. In addition to which Luton people undoubtedly realised that they were taking a last farewell of the Territorial Unit of their County Regiment before it proceeded on active service overseas. There was also the added circumstance that the 5th Bedfords were commanded, as is the 2nd Battalion to-day, by a Luton man.

As the Bedfords marched into George Street, punctually

Digitized by Google



PL. VIII.] GREAT WAR PERIOD. [*E* 66

OFFICERS 5TH BATTALION BEDFORDSHIRE REGIMENT (T.F.), 1915.

Top Row: Lieut. F. W. H. Nicholas, 2nd-Lieut. J. T. Yarde, Capt. E. V. Andreini, Lieut. F. B. Hobbs, Lieut. F. W. Ballance, Lieut. T. A. Franklin. *2nd Row*: 2nd-Lieut. P. R. Chaundler, Lieut. W. S. Chirnside, Lieut. C. R. Day, Lieut. L. J. Hunter, Lieut. F. S. Shoosmith, 2nd-Lieut. H. E. Woodhouse, Lieut. D. Rising, Lieut. C. H. Miskin, 2nd-Lieut. C. R. Day, 2nd-Lieut. R. D. J. Brighten, Lieut. F. C. Kempson, R.A.M.C. *3rd Row*: Capt. E. T. Maier, Capt. C. T. Baker, Capt. R. M. Smythe, Capt. G. J. Norris, Major J. Clutton, Lieut.-Col. E. W. Brighten (commanding), Capt. and Adjt. H. Younghusband, Capt. J. E. Hill, Capt. W. K. Meakin, Capt. B. C. Cumberland, Capt. R. Forrest. *4th Row*: Lieut. C. R. James, 2nd-Lieut. E. L. Rawlins, 2nd-Lieut. H. S. Toogood, 2nd-Lieut. E. R. Campbell, 2nd-Lieut. B. W. Smythe.

Digitized by Google

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R L

Digitized by Google

on the hour of seven o'clock, they were greeted by a continuous roar of cheering, and it was not possible properly to assess the size of the crowd until, the reception over, the troops moved off to Luton Hoo and those who had turned out to give them such a fine send-off were free to fill the roadways.

The Mayor of Luton, who received the Battalion and made a most stirring speech, was Councillor W. J. Primett. After the Battalion had bivouacked that night in Luton Hoo Park (the men who lived in Luton having been given permission to sleep at home), a Church Parade was held the next morning, the Rev. A. E. Chapman, Vicar of Luton, conducting Divine Service in the Parish Church.

It was particularly appropriate that the service should be held in what is essentially a soldiers' House of God, since Athelstan, the warrior king, was present at its dedication, while the greater part of the building was erected in 1120 by Robert Duke of Gloucester, a great soldier, and the latest part, the Someries Chapel, built in 1461 by the first Lord Wenlock, who fell in the Wars of the Roses.

After Church Parade the Battalion marched through some of the principal streets of Luton, before being dismissed at the Corn Exchange on general leave of absence, until the evening, when the last stage of the march back to St. Albans was resumed.

The period of training at St. Albans was now rapidly drawing to a close, and on Sunday, 25th July 1915, a farewell service to the Battalion was held in the famous old St. Albans Abbey. This was attended by the Mayor, Councillor B. C. Edwards, the Corporation, and most of the officials and prominent people of the neighbourhood.

It is significant that in a letter received by the C.O., wishing the Battalion every success on active service, the Mayor of St. Albans stated that during the stay of the Battalion the conduct of the men had been exemplary, and there had been no single case of any description before the civil authorities.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER FOUR

Formation and History of the 2/5th and 3/5th Battalions

THIS book has been confined, so far, to the history of the 1/5th Battalion, and the units which were its ancestors under the Volunteer Scheme; but, as the war progressed, not only were greater demands made upon the manhood of the nation, but inevitable changes in conditions of service rendered it necessary to form both a Home Defence Force and Draft Finding units. These two functions it was found possible to synchronise. As briefly indicated in the preceding chapter, the nucleus of another battalion of the 5th Bedfordshire Regt. was formed in September 1914, by drafts from the First Line Battalion of those men who were unfit for active service abroad, or who, for good and sufficient reasons, found themselves unable to accept the new foreign service requirements of the Territorial Army. Other battalions of the 162nd (East Midland) Infantry Brigade formed their own Second Line in a similar manner, and the 69th Division was the higher command created to contain the various Second Line units of the Eastern Mounted Brigade and the East Anglian Division.

The new unit was at first designated the 5th (Reserve) Battalion, and became later the 2/5th Bn. The Bedfordshire Regt. It was liable to go into action in the event of a landing, or attempted landing, by the enemy.

At the same time, the unit was responsible for training all A1 ranks for service overseas, and for supplying drafts when called upon to do so. The Battalion commenced sending such drafts overseas in September 1915, when

Digitized by Google

officers were posted to the 1/5th Bedfords, and it continued as a Draft Finding unit until it was disbanded in February 1918. It is impossible to give the total number of men trained for active service and drafted overseas, but they must have numbered several thousands.

It must, of course, be obvious that the task allotted to the officers of this battalion was no light one; since its composition was constantly changing, as drafts were despatched and recruits received to bring it up to establishment again. None the less, all requirements were met and the recruits trained into the finished soldiers, who furnished such satisfactory drafts throughout the war.

The training of the Battalion was carried out mainly in accordance with the Syllabus of Training issued by the War Office. This training, which was of an intensive character, lasted approximately sixteen weeks.

The nucleus of the Instructors for the Reserve Battalion was found by the First Line unit, which supplied Captains J. W. Taylor, J. K. Batten and R. L. Webb, Lieutenant G. N. Hobbs and Colour-Sergeant-Instr. Bunker, who became Regtl.-Sergt.-Major, and a number of N.C.O.'s. Captain Webb was appointed Adjutant. The following is the full list of officers who joined the Battalion on formation at Bedford in September 1914, under the command of Lieut.-Colonel The Hon. Victor Russell, O.B.E. :—

Lt.-Col. The Hon. Victor Russell, O.B.E.
Major S. J. Symons.
Major R. R. B. Orlebar.
Major J. B. McBride, R.A.M.C.
Capt. (Hon. Major) G. M. de L. Dayrell.
Capt. J. W. Taylor.
Capt. J. K. Batten.
Capt. and Adjutant R. L. Webb.
Capt. A. G. T. Smith.
Capt. G. P. L. Orr.
Capt. E. J. Saner.
Capt. F. W. F. Lathom.
Lieut. H. Seys-Phillips.
Lieut. G. N. Hobbs.
Lieut. A. C. Cookson.
Lieut. R. M. Plummer.
Lieut. G. Desborough.
Lieut. A. B. McBride.
Lieut. A. K. Orlebar.
2nd-Lt. V. Murphy.
2nd-Lt. L. P. New.
2nd-Lt. A. Grayson Hartley.
2nd-Lt. C. R. Waterton.
2nd-Lt. E. A. M. Waterton.
2nd-Lt. J. Waterton.
2nd-Lt. W. J. Dayrell-Steyning.
2nd-Lt. E. E. Colquhoun.
2nd-Lt. W. W. Wilkin.

Digitized by Google

2nd-Lt. H. C. Bowen.
2nd-Lt. J. J. Rock.
2nd-Lt. G. C. Barford.
2nd-Lt. H. B. Thacker.
2nd-Lt. C. H. Hart.
2nd-Lt. E. S. Caton.
2nd-Lt. C. L. Henderson.
2nd-Lt. H. W. Coronin.
2nd-Lt. H. C. Soundy.
Lieut. and Quartermaster R. Stephenson.

Lieut.-Colonel The Hon. Victor Russell, O.B.E., commanded the Battalion from its formation until he proceeded overseas very soon after the unit was moved to Harrogate in June 1916. He was succeeded by Major F. W. F. Lathom, M.C., who assumed temporary command, pending the appointment of Colonel E. G. Mercer, C.M.G., early in 1917. Colonel Mercer retained the command until the Battalion was finally disbanded.

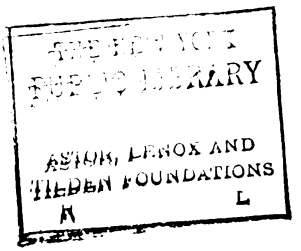
The earliest training of the 2/5th was performed in Bedford Park, but when the Park was becoming too badly damaged by the thousand odd pairs of heavy ammunition boots, which marched and countermarched across it, the training of the troops was transferred to the fields which lie between the Park and Kimbolton Road. The chief memory of those days concerns the marvellous variety of uniforms which appeared on parade, owing to the tremendous influx of recruits all over the country, for whom the stocks of khaki were totally inadequate. Bowler hats and khaki tunics, khaki trousers and service caps, but civilian coats, were typical outfits; but no one, soldiers or civilians, minded then. Nothing mattered, so long as a man wore something in the nature of a uniform, to make it plain to all and sundry that he was trying "to do his bit."

There was one song, which the men took great delight in shouting as they marched to and from their training ground. It ran :—

"If you wash me in the water,
Where you washed your dirty daughter,
I shall be whiter
Than the whitewash on the wall."

The inhabitants of Bedford, however, either doubted

Digitized by Google



Digitized by Google

THE COMMANDING OFFICER, ADJUTANT, WARRANT OFFICERS AND N.C.O.'S, 5TH BATTALION BEDFORDSHIRE REGIMENT, ST. ALBANS, 1915.

Back Row: Sergts. Tarry, Green, Mead, Day, Odell, Wheatley, Penny, Brown. *2nd Row*: Sergts. Buckingham, Burgess, Martin, McPheat, Perkins, Gilbert, Stapleton, Barker, Elston, Beaumont, Lewzey. *Centre*: Sergts. Robinson, Dracup, Whitworth, Davis, Hinks, Rayner, Dudley, Butler, [?] , Mead, Allen, Hoolichan, Fellows, [?] , Lovell. *Sitting*: C.Q.M.S. Holt, C.Q.M.S. Sugars, C.S.M. Milton, C.S.M. Brazier, R.S.M. Munson, Colonel Brighten, Capt. Younghusband (Adjutant), R.Q.M.S. Scott, C.S.M. Odell, C.Q.M.S. Bateman, C.Q.M.S. Chilton. *Lying*: Sergt.-Cook Finding, Sergt. Foster, Sergt. Buckingham, Sergt. Wheeler.

Digitized by Google

the truth, or objected to the sentiments of this song and, upon their representations, the singing of it was strictly prohibited. It was, however, a harmless ballad and one remembers infinitely worse ditties.

Under the keen and skilful guidance of specially selected officers, and the younger members of the Mess, whom they were knocking into shape, the raw material of the rank and file which came in as recruits was rapidly moulded into something very like fighting men. In this work the officers were fortunate in having the services of a number of well-seasoned old Warrant Officers and N.C.O.'s to help them.

By December 1914 the Battalion was fitted out with uniform, to the extent that each man had one regulation khaki suit.

Then a move was made to Newmarket and the Battalion went into billets among the inhabitants for the winter months, but was put under canvas on the Brickfields at Exning during the early part of the summer. Although many troops were quartered in Newmarket during the war, it has always been said that the Bedford boys were the favourites. This is perhaps accounted for by the fact that they were the first troops to be stationed in the town; and, perhaps, because they were representative of the best of England's youth, the lads who volunteered in 1914.

At Newmarket equipment was received and the Japanese pattern rifles were issued. Up to this time much of the work had been in the nature of long route marches, designed to harden the men, whose physique was being built up by constant physical training. The men being now conditioned, however, it was possible to vary their training considerably and the Heath, which leads up to Moulton, was the scene of many a hard day's field operations.

Mildenhall, later the headquarters of the Bombing School, which lies some nine miles from Newmarket, is where a rifle range was built and the Japanese rifles were tried out. They proved to be very good weapons, but the

Digitized by Google

ammunition, also Japanese, played tricks at times and, consequently, there was some curious grouping and not a little bad language from the old soldiers who were accustomed to the high quality of British Army S.A.A.

It was early in June 1915 that the Battalion, now about a thousand strong, left billets for canvas on the Brickfields at the edge of the town. During all this period large drafts had been sent to the 1/5th Battalion, which had now completed its preliminary training in England and was at St. Albans, awaiting orders to proceed overseas. On 20th June 1915 the under age, the over age, and all unfit men left the Brickfields for Southwold on the East Coast, upon the formation of the 68th Provisional Battalion.

The large reduction thus caused in the strength of the 2/5th Battalion was speedily made good by recruits from the many recruiting centres throughout Bedfordshire, in addition to which quite a large proportion of Newmarket men enlisted in the Battalion.

This meant, of course, that the amateur enthusiasm of these eager recruits must be moulded into shape, and in this connection the work of Colour-Sergeant-Instr. Bunker was invaluable. There were again the old features of routine training, such as "physical jerks," tactical exercises, considerable route marches, night operations, and the mounting of guards, which were apt to be rather nondescript in character at times ; but with all this work to do there was yet another phase of a soldier's training to be entered upon.

On 27th July 1915 the Battalion entrained for Brentwood, to construct trenches and barbed wire entanglements —and what the men said about that barbed wire is better remembered than revealed—in connection with the defences of London. They were, however, employed rather less than a month on this duty, after which they returned to Exning and resumed draft finding training. This training was, of necessity, somewhat upset, temporarily, in September, when a large draft of officers was despatched as a reinforcement to the First Line on Gallipoli.

Digitized by Google

The beginning of 1916 was noteworthy for the inspection of the 69th Brigade by the G.O.C. in C., First Army, on Newmarket Heath. Then followed a period of frequent air raid warnings, and on 31st March the Zeppelins put in their appearance over the town and the adjoining neighbourhood. Some twenty bombs were dropped and considerable damage was done to property; but, although the Battalion thus received its baptism of fire, it sustained no casualties.

In the following month the Battalion was split up for the time being. The trained men proceeded to Yarmouth to construct important foreshore defence works and the recruits stayed on at Newmarket to continue their routine training. At the end of June, however, the 2/5th Battalion was reassembled at Harrogate, and, shortly afterwards, Lieut.-Colonel The Hon. Victor Russell relinquished the command, upon proceeding overseas, and was succeeded, pending the appointment of a new C.O., by Major F. W. F. Lathom.

On moving to Harrogate the Battalion, as part of the 69th Division, left Eastern Command, and came under the authority of Northern Command.

On arrival in the north the Battalion went under canvas at Killinghall Moor, some three miles north of Harrogate. At this place the whole of the 69th Division was encamped.

The men should have thrived in the bracing north country air, but the camp site was most unsuitable, on account of the clay soil. In addition, a spell of wet weather was experienced and the camp was soon little better than a quagmire.

A further move was made to Darlington in October 1916, and there the Battalion was accommodated in schools and empty houses. The nature of the surrounding country rather restricted the extent and variety of the training, but that period must be remembered for the extraordinary enthusiasm with which the men saw a Zeppelin brought down in flames near Darlington on 27th November 1916.

Early in 1917, Colonel E. G. Mercer assumed command,

Digitized by Google

and it is notable of the fitness which the men had attained that between 30th April and 10th May they moved by route march from Darlington to Carburton Camp in the Dukeries, proceeding by way of Northallerton, Thirsk, Boroughbridge, Weatherby, and Doncaster.

At Carburton the training areas were very large and the 2/5th Battalion went into Divisional Camp; but the only noteworthy episode of this period was the inspection of the 69th Division by H.R.H. The Duke of Connaught, on 15th June 1917.

The Battalion left Carburton Camp on 8th October 1917, and marched to hutments at Clipstone Camp, near Mansfield. There they remained until February 1918. By the end of 1917, however, the process of disbanding the Battalion had commenced, and on New Year's Day 1918 a very large draft of men left, to be followed eleven days later by a final draft of two hundred and fifty.

The officers, on the disbanding of the unit, were posted to the 3/5th Battalion at Crowborough, and such of the men as had been passed fit for active service were drafted overseas, while the remainder were sent to Home Service units.

The 3/5th Bedfords

Early in 1915 it became obvious that it would be necessary to find considerable reinforcing drafts, as soon as the First Line proceeded overseas; and, meanwhile, it would not be desirable to deplete the strength of the Second Line more than was absolutely necessary, as this unit was designed, for the present, as part of the Home Defence Army. It was decided therefore to raise a Third Line battalion. At that time, however, recruiting was beginning to fall off, although the need of men and yet more men was ever increasing.

During the latter part of May and the early part of June the 2/5th Battalion, and its band, undertook a recruiting march through Bedfordshire, under the direction of Major R. R. B. Orlebar, who, some years previously, had commanded A Company of the 5th Battalion. After severing

Digitized by Google

his connection with the Battalion, prior to the outbreak of war, he rejoined the Second Line as a Major, when it was formed in September 1914, and remained in that capacity until he was transferred to take over the command of the 3/5th Battalion.

The recruiting march produced sufficient volunteers to form the nucleus of a Third Line unit. The beginnings of the Battalion remained at Bedford for a short time, and on 9th August was moved by train to Bears Rail Camp in the Great Park at Windsor.

Capt. G. P. L. Orr was appointed Adjutant. He was an officer of considerable experience, who had served as a Lieutenant in the 3rd V.B. Bedfordshire Regt., prior to the creation of the Territorial Force. In the preceding September he, like Major Orlebar, had joined the Second Line unit. Before that time he had acted as personal secretary to Mr. C. Arthur Pearson, who was one of the joint secretaries of the Prince of Wales's Relief Fund. Among the other officers were Capt. G. J. Norris, a familiar figure in Luton, who was prevented by an accident from proceeding to the Dardanelles with the 1/5th Battalion, and 2nd-Lieut. C. V. Douglas, a cousin of J. W. H. T. Douglas who had captained the English Cricket XI in the last Australian tour. The Quartermaster was Lieut. F. E. Archer-Smith, who had served, formerly, as Orderly-Room Sergeant with the 2/5th Battalion at Newmarket. On the permanent Staff were Sergeant-Major Mendham, and Sergeant Gilder, formerly of the Queen's Regiment, who took over the duties of Orderly-Room Sergeant.

The Battalion settled down quickly at Windsor, where they were visited upon several occasions by H.M. The King, H.R.H. The Prince of Wales, and H.R.H. Princess Mary.

The function of the Battalion was to train and send out drafts, as they might be required, to fill gaps in the ranks of the 1/5th Battalion, and by mid-August urgent appeals were being made for 1,000 recruits. But still recruiting hung fire, until there was published in the papers during September the copy of a letter which Lieut.-Colonel

Digitized by Google

Brighten had written to Lieut.-Colonel Orlebar, describing the first action in which the 1/5th Battalion took part on Gallipoli, and in which urgent representations were made of the need for obtaining recruits and sending out reinforcing drafts of all ranks.

Captain Taylor, Lieut. R. W. Limbert and a number of recruiting sergeants were sent to Bedford to stimulate enlistment and after that the recruits began to roll up.

Towards the end of August the Battalion had been inspected by General Boyle, Inspector-General of the Territorial Force, from whom they won high praise.

On 2nd October, a great recruiting rally was held in Luton under the arrangements made by a joint committee of the representatives of the Luton Town Council and members of the South Bedfordshire Recruiting Committee. This demonstration was attended by a detachment of the 3/5th Battalion from Windsor, who furnished a Guard of Honour.

From Windsor the Battalion moved, subsequently, into huts at Halton Camp, Bucks, where it stayed and trained and performed its draft finding duties until the middle of 1917. Then followed a year of training at Crowborough in Sussex, but in August 1918, the Battalion entrained for St. Leonards-on-Sea, where it remained until it was finally disbanded.

Apart from the fact that the unit was inspected by Field-Marshal Sir William Robertson, and complimented by him upon the high state of its training and efficiency, their are no outstanding incidents to relate, nor was St. Leonards troubled by air raids while the Battalion was there.

Billets were found in large empty houses and messing centres and canteens were set up in the different areas.

A large training ground was found just outside the town and put into shape by the Battalion. A bayonet assault course was laid out, bombing trenches were dug and a rifle range was built, so that the Battalion had full facilities for learning its job.

Officers came and went, of course, with great frequency ;

Digitized by Google

but there was always a welcome for those returning from the front, who could tell their younger or less experienced comrades a good deal of what active warfare was like. These officers, too, were particularly useful in the training of the Battalion and in helping to form the fighting character of the men.

By the end of 1916 Lieut. W. S. Chirnside, who had been wounded in the first fight on the Gallipoli Peninsula, where he had won the Military Cross for conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty, was serving with the Third Line and acting as Adjutant. By that time, too, he had been promoted to the rank of Captain.

He did not, however, stay long in England, but proceeded to France, where he joined the 1st Bn. The Bedfordshire Regt. just before Lieut.-Colonel Butler left. Chirnside at first commanded a company of the regular battalion, but was soon acting Second-in-Command upon promotion to a majority. He rose subsequently to the command of the Battalion, and also won a bar to his Military Cross at Vimy Ridge on 23rd April 1917. *The Gazette* reads: "Capt. Wm. Stuart Chirnside, M.C., Bedf. R.: For conspicuous gallantry in action, when, despite heavy casualties, he reached his objective. Later, after being nearly buried by a shell, he held on to his position against heavy odds, only retiring after the evacuation of the wounded and the establishment of a line in the rear. (M.C. gazetted 7th Dec. 1915.)"

During the whole time that the 3/5th Battalion was embodied it continued as a draft finding unit. Some of these drafts went out to the Dardanelles, some to Egypt and Palestine, and yet others were sent over to France both up to and after the signing of the Armistice. After the Armistice, also, large drafts were sent to Felixstowe and other stations. The Battalion at this time was pretty well up to full strength and consisted largely of young soldiers, but there was also a proportion of experienced veterans who had seen service with the 1st Hertfords in France. Demobilisation was carried out gradually at

Digitized by Google

St. Leonards until February 1919, and in March the final small party, representing the cadre of the unit, proceeded to Bedford and was disbanded.

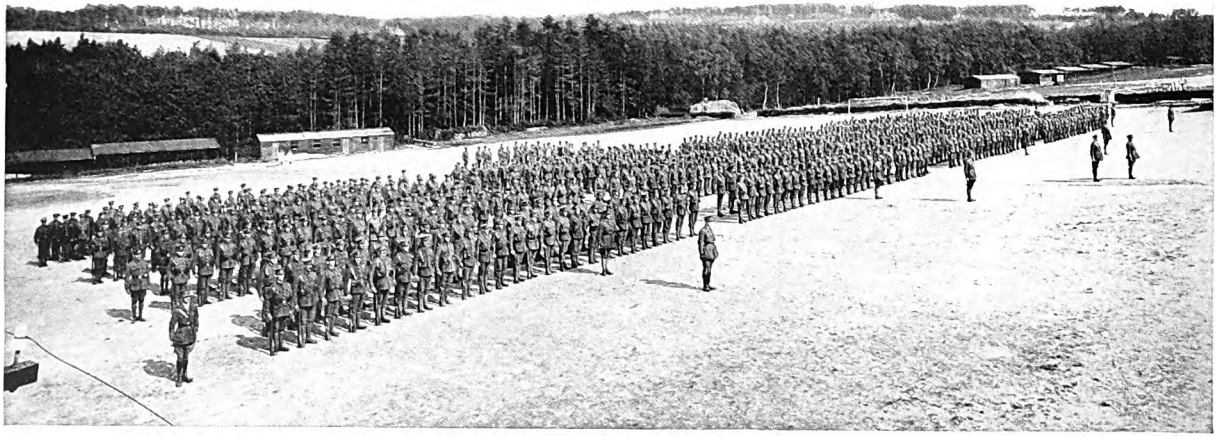
According to the Army List of July 1916 the officers at that time serving with the 3/5th Battalion were as follows:

C.O.: Lt.-Col. R. R. B. Orlebar.
Adj.: Major G. P. L. Orr.
Q.M.: Hon. Lieut. F. E. Smith.
Capt. F. W. Ballance.
Capt. R. O. Clark.
Lieut. W. S. Chirnside, M.C.
Lieut. R. M. Plummer.
Lieut. G. R. Day.
Lieut. M. A. Strugnell.
Lieut. R. H. Smith.
Lieut. L. J. F. Oertling.
Lieut. J. M. Glenn.
Lieut. C. F. Buck.
Lieut. R. W. Limbert (attached Records Office).
2nd-Lt. H. H. Sperling.
2nd-Lt. A. G. Hartley.
2nd-Lt. G. C. Barford.
2nd-Lt. W. P. Hill.
2nd-Lt. H. S. Toogood.
2nd-Lt. H. H. Theobald.
2nd-Lt. G. A. Pinchin.
2nd-Lt. J. B. Birkett.
2nd-Lt. T. A. J. Coat.
2nd-Lt. W. S. Davis.
2nd-Lt. Sir A. K. B. Osborn, Bart. (Hon. Maj. ret. Militia), (Hon. Capt. in Army, 5th Dec. 1900).
2nd-Lt. R. C. Snowden.
2nd-Lt. E. W. Hastings.
2nd-Lt. R. N. Balding.
2nd-Lt. H. W. J. Powell.
2nd-Lt. K. B. Hutchinson.
2nd-Lt. C. L. Crawhall-Wilson.
2nd-Lt. C. J. Nixon.
2nd-Lt. A. M. Galls.
2nd-Lt. R. J. Clutton.
2nd-Lt. E. A. Upton.
2nd-Lt. A. T. Hobbs.
2nd-Lt. H. M. H. G. Blakeney.
2nd-Lt. A. J. Mander.
2nd-Lt. A. G. Hucklesby.
2nd-Lt. C. P. Letchford.
2nd-Lt. S. Burnet.
2nd-Lt. H. W. E. Smith.
2nd-Lt. J. V. A. Simpson.
2nd-Lt. H. G. Watts.
2nd-Lt. G. Parsons.
2nd-Lt. H. C. Moxon.
2nd-Lt. G. R. Buck.

The Battalion was commanded first by Lieut.-Colonel Orlebar, then by Major Bassett, and afterwards, until disbandment, by Lieut.-Colonel T. S. Wolloscombe, of the Middlesex Regiment.

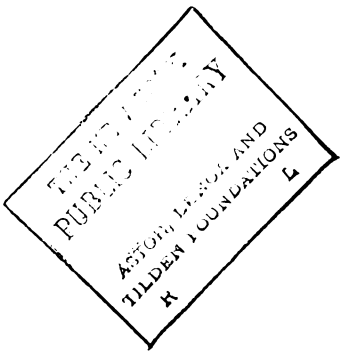
It is interesting to note that Sir A. K. B. Osborn, Bart., who served with the Battalion, with a temporary commission as 2nd-Lieutenant, dated 24th August 1915, is a descendant of that Sir George Osborn, of Chicksand Priory, near Biggleswade, who was concerned in the first formation of the Bedfordshire Rifle Volunteers in 1860. Lieut. R. W.

Digitized by Google



PL. X.] 3/5TH BATTALION BEDFORDSHIRE REGIMENT, 1917. [*F* 78
COMMANDING OFFICER, LIEUT.-COLONEL R. R. B. ORLEBAR.

Digitized by Google



Digitized by Google

Limbert, who was Machine Gun Officer to the Battalion, was also Honorary Secretary of the 5th Bedfordshire Regimental Comforts Fund Committee, which did such splendid work in keeping the men overseas supplied with pipes, tobacco, cigarettes and even soap and all those thousand and one little comforts which served so admirably to keep the fighting men in touch with their homes, while they were enduring the rigours of active service upon their country's behalf.

At a later period the Comforts Fund was extended to benefit all Bedfordshire soldiers serving overseas.

The combined result of a big appeal made for the Bedfordshire Territorials Comforts Fund during the last two months of 1918 produced from the county no less a sum than £1,834. The collection of this sum enabled its administrators to extend the scope of their activities and the many letters received at the Shire Hall, Bedford, testified fully to the gratitude with which the gifts were received.

Since the inception of the fund close on £2,500 had been subscribed towards supplying comforts to Bedfordshire Territorials overseas. Among the comforts despatched were hundreds of tins of Army and Navy biscuits, chocolate biscuits, tins of Oxo cubes, and cocoa or tea with sugar and milk tablets, fruit cakes and, of course, thousands upon thousands of cigarettes, hundreds of pounds of tobacco and not a few cigars. The 1/5th Bedfords also acknowledged several parcels of athletic equipment received by them from the *Daily Express* Cheery Fund, but arranged for by the Bedfordshire Territorial Comforts Committee. They were also sent a Christmastide cheque for £20, and the account of how they spent it will be found further on in this volume. Games, writing pads, jig-saw puzzles, and playing cards were also sent out and there is a further item in the accounts for 1,500 bars of Wrigley's spearmint chewing gum. Other units, besides the 1/5th Bedfords, who benefited were the 1/1st Eastern Field Brigade Ambulance and the 1/1st Bedfordshire Yeomanry.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER FIVE

Foreign Service—1915

Embarkation—The "Braemar Castle"—Gallipoli

Our attention may now return to the 1/5th Bedfords, whom we left at St. Albans upon the eve of embarkation for an unknown front; for the mere fact that tropical kit had been issued meant nothing more than the Battalion was destined for "Somewhere out East."

Considerable latitude was allowed the men on the last day in St. Albans, and, although the time for the entraining parade was fixed for 1.45 a.m., on the 26th July, the Battalion turned up to a man at the appointed place, accompanied by what appeared to be nearly the whole of the townsfolk. Every one was in the best of spirits at the thought of taking part in the Great Adventure, and scenes of enthusiasm took place as the Battalion attempted to fall in in fours in almost total darkness for the march down the well-known streets to the station. Wives, sisters and friends joined in until the Battalion was swollen to much over its normal strength; but on arrival at the station perfect order prevailed, and the work of entraining was carried out silently and expeditiously. Many old Battalion officers and other ranks had turned up to say "au revoir," and eventually the train steamed out to the accompaniment of much good natured chaff and loud and prolonged cheering. The Transport Section, under Lieut. C. H. Miskin, unfortunately had to be left behind, but rejoined the Battalion after the evacuation of Gallipoli in December 1915.

Digitized by Google

The long run to Plymouth was broken at Exeter, where the Lady Mayoress, assisted by willing helpers, handed out hot tea, coffee, sandwiches, cakes, etc., to every one on the train, which finally reached its destination and steamed on to the quay at Plymouth at 4.45 p.m. Stores of various sorts had then to be got on board the *Braemar Castle*, and very smart work on the part of the men enabled everything to be ready in time for the boat to weigh anchor at 5.30 p.m. when it left the shores of old England, accompanied by an escort of destroyers, bound for a then unknown destination.

In addition to the 1/5th Bedfords, the troops on board the *Braemar Castle* comprised Brigadier-General C. de Winton, commanding the 162nd Brigade, together with his Staff, one-half Battalion of the 7th Bn. The Essex Regt., and various other details. Lieut.-Colonel E. W. Brighten was appointed O.C. Troops, with Capt. Younghusband as Ship's Adjutant, and Lieut. W. S. Chirnside carrying on the duties of Battalion Adjutant.

The men were at once told off to their decks and messes, and some amusement was caused at first by the lack of knowledge of nautical terms shown by the men, which resulted in a certain amount of confusion. Rifles had now to be stored in the armoury, and blankets and hammocks drawn from the Ship's Quartermaster, after which all were ready for the excellent meal that was served piping hot by the ship's crew.

One of the first orders to be issued by Lieut.-Colonel Brighten was for boat parade, and officers and all other ranks were drawn up and allotted to boats and rafts by which they had at once to parade should the alarm be sounded. These parades took place at least once a day, usually about 4 p.m.; but some consternation was caused amongst those having knowledge of the arrangements, when an unauthorised alarm was sounded by a young bugler.

Needless to say, there was a considerable amount of "wind up" upon this occasion, for every one had heard of the unpleasant habits of German submarine crews, and all knew, moreover, most that there was to know, to say

Digitized by Google

nothing of a great deal that might be imagined, about the deadly and devastating effects of bursting torpedoes and the rapidity with which even the largest of ships, disabled by such means, may be sent to the bottom of the sea.

The scare was quickly over, however, and once more the normal round of ship's routine was resumed. But still, after all the hard and strenuous training the Battalion had been put through, the predominating desire in every one's mind was to get at least safely to the scene of active hostilities.

Life on board ship was pleasant enough, although a far different one from the lazy time enjoyed by the average "globe trotter."

Physical exercises, of course, came first in the daily routine, and when these were over very little time was lost in getting down to the appetising breakfast which had been prepared. The men were set to work smartening up themselves and their equipment, and lectures were given by the officers on various subjects suitable to the occasion. First-aid instruction was given to all in turn by the Medical Officer. After dinner most of the men settled down to letter writing, and the more energetically inclined played medicine ball, and other popular games, while "House" came in for its full share of attention from those who liked a small gamble.

Wherefore, every one on board was pretty fully occupied, and whenever a spare hour could be found by the officers it was devoted to the censoring of letters, although an occasional grouse was heard from one of the subaltern officers engaged in the work at the verbosity of some of the writers, whose epistles ran to many sheets of paper.

In the ranks of the Battalion were many country lads, some of whom had never before seen the sea, and the majority of whom had not been on it. It was not unnatural, therefore, that the Bay of Biscay should take its toll of the majority of those on board, and for a short spell nothing could be done in the way of training and physical exercises, which form such an important part in the curriculum of a

Digitized by Google

troopship. Fit and healthy men like the Bedfords, however, did not give way for long, and twenty-four hours after reaching the notorious Bay they had practically a clean bill of health. One unlucky fellow, whose teeth had not been provided by nature, managed to shoot these most useful articles overboard, and was consequently left behind when the *Braemar Castle* reached Malta. One of the Battalion officers, who was invalided to that island just before the evacuation at Anzac, was very much astonished to see him in the capacity of a hospital orderly still waiting in vain for the artificial teeth, which had not yet been replaced, and rumour had it that he was still there months afterwards, patiently waiting for something to be done.

The voyage passed all too quickly, however, and between 1 a.m. and 2 a.m. on the morning of the 31st July the famous Rock of Gibraltar was sighted, and those on duty had an interesting time watching the various searchlights from the fortress itself and from warships in the harbour playing on the boat. Most of the troops were asleep, however, and there was much disappointment at breakfast when it was realised that they were in the Mediterranean and that the picturesque beauty of Gibraltar had faded away in the distance.

Shortly after this the *Braemar Castle* was approached by a destroyer, which at once commenced to signal rapidly by semaphore. A good many of the officers were able to pick up the questions and replies readily enough, and the enquiries were mainly directed as to the name of the ship, what troops were on board, and where they were proceeding. The necessary information being given, the Navy people replied that, as there were enemy submarines in the vicinity, they would act as escort to Malta. After cruising about for an hour or so, the semaphore arms were again seen to be busy, and this time it was a request for newspapers, and particularly for *Punch*, if there was a copy to spare.

Orders were now issued for all available machine guns to be mounted on deck, and the gunners were instructed to

Digitized by Google

fire on any enemy submarines sighted, but fortunately no enemy craft were observed, much to the disappointment of the gun teams, who felt confident in their ability to destroy anything from a submarine to a battleship. It may be added that subsequent experience proved that such weapons were of little avail against submersible monsters of the deep.

The first Sunday on board was the 1st August, and the troops paraded for divine service, conducted by the Medical Officer of the 1/5th Bedfords, Dr. C. E. Kempson, who was also in Holy Orders. Before embarking the band had taken over their duties as stretcher bearers, and the only musical instrument available was an accordion in the possession of Lance-Corporal Tebby, of the Quartermaster's Stores. This was requisitioned, and greatly assisted the singing and responses, which were, however, much more vigorous than musical.

Monday 2nd August was Bank Holiday, and marked the completion of one year's mobilised service for most of the unit. The ship was now passing near the African coast in perfect weather, and the visibility was so good that the buildings in towns several miles away could be clearly seen. Both sky and sea were beautiful shades of blue; whilst day by day the weather grew hotter, and all on board were settling down to the voyage with thorough enjoyment. Great interest was occasioned at the numerous mirages which now began to be observed daily. Everything which came in sight looked "topsy turvy"; ships and craft of all sorts were apparently sailing upside down. The most curious sights imaginable were seen, and just the same effects were obtained when field glasses were used. At this time, too, dhows and feluccas, those true ships of the East, began to be seen for the first time.

Apart from these normal interests of a sea voyage, great excitement was caused by an imaginative sentry who thought he had sighted two enemy submarines and at once gave the alarm. Upon investigation by the ship's officers, however, that which the sentry had seen proved to be

Digitized by Google

nothing more formidable than a couple of sportive whales, whose black, glistening backs had, however, given the soldier every excuse for his mistake.

Before Malta was reached early in the afternoon of the 3rd August, the troops had discarded their serge uniforms in favour of tropical khaki kit.

Valetta Harbour was full of vessels both British and French and the *Braemar Castle* was immediately surrounded by the usual assortment of " bum " boats, the occupants of which aroused the interest of the troops by diving for money and performing various acrobatic and aquatic tricks. The " bum " boat men, however, did but a poor trade in their stock of eatables and fruit, which looked tempting enough, but which the troops were prohibited from buying.

Not unnaturally every one was anxious to stretch his legs ashore, and there was a good deal of disappointment when it was learned that no shore leave would be granted, as the ship was to sail again in three hours' time.

In point of fact the only man who landed at Malta was the Armourer-Sergeant, who was sent ashore to secure files wherewith to sharpen the bayonets. He, however, failed to return in time, and so the *Braemar Castle* sailed without him. With the true resourcefulness of the British soldier, this N.C.O. succeeded in getting a berth aboard a faster craft and so actually arrived in Alexandria before his comrades, whom he rejoined at that place.

When they left Malta the Bedfords had still no knowledge of the destination for which they were bound, and much speculation was rife as to where they would ultimately disembark. This proved to be the Port of Alexandria, where they arrived on 6th August.

It was then mid-afternoon, and fatigue parties were at once detailed to unload various regimental stores and kits, which were to be left behind at Alexandria, the Base for operations already in progress in the Dardanelles at Cape Helles and Anzac. From this circumstance the troops began to get a definite notion of the front upon which they would at last put their training to the practical test.

Digitized by Google

As no man, except the Armourer-Sergeant, who was welcomed back joyously, had put foot on dry land since embarkation at Plymouth, orders for a route march through Alexandria were received with a quite unusual amount of enthusiasm. It was an interesting march, too, for the strange sights, quaint native dresses and even the peculiar odour which pervades all cities of the East, provided an undoubted fascination for all those men who were experiencing these things for the first time.

Five hours on *terra firma* did not, however, seem much, after so long a spell on board ship, but there was no grousing when the *Braemar Castle* was rejoined, for every one knew that the real test was hourly drawing nearer.

The ship sailed again at 4 p.m. on 7th August, leaving behind Captain R. M. Smythe, Lieut. F. B. Hobbs, four N.C.O.'s and thirty-nine men, who, much to their own disgust, were to act as Base Details and First Line Reinforcements.

The next stage of the voyage, from Egypt into the Ægean Archipelago, was full of interest, as the course lay close to a number of the rocky islands, and feluccas and other quaint craft of all shapes and sizes were constantly in view.

Early on the morning of 10th August the ship passed through the bottle neck entrance into the Harbour of Mudros, which is one of the largest harbours in the East and at that time served as the advanced Base for the Dardanelles. Numbers of warships of the various Allied countries lay off Lemnos Island, pinnaces were steaming about in every direction, and there were numerous hospital ships and other craft; the whole presenting a picture of such animation as was only to be expected so close to the scenes of hostilities.

The stay at Mudros was of brief duration, and the same evening the *Braemar Castle* dropped her anchor in Imbros Harbour.

The Bedfords were now on the very verge of their first action; and, as Brigadier-General de Winton had told

Digitized by Google

them at their last church parade aboard ship, they were going into a strange land to fight their country's battles, where many of them might fall.

At that time General Sir Ian Hamilton, G.O.C. in C., Mediterranean Expeditionary Force, had already made up his mind to launch a vigorous attack from Anzac, combined with a surprise landing to the north of that locality. He was anxious that the new troops, that is to say the 53rd and 54th Divisions—the 5th Bedfords were in the latter—should enhance their fighting value by a baptism of fire in the trenches, but time and the phases of the moon were destined to be the chief factors in determining the date of the next big push against the Turkish positions.

In the first place the task of relieving the troops already holding the trenches was likely to prove a long and arduous one, and, more important still, it was essential to select a time when there would be no moonlight to reveal the large number of fresh troops which it was hoped to smuggle into the Anzac positions, or to spoil the surprise landing of another large force at Suvla Bay.

An excellent opportunity of anticipating the July moon had been lost already. It was of vital importance, therefore, that the blow should be struck by the second week in August, otherwise the whole venture would have to be postponed for yet another month, and, meantime, the Turks were strengthening their positions day by day.

An important action was fought on the night of 1st July, when 200 men of the 11th Australian Infantry Battalion crossed their own barbed wire on planks and captured an extension of a Turkish trench which threatened the flank of an important British position.

By the time this action was fought a large proportion of the fresh reinforcements had arrived; the war-worn 29th Division was relieved temporarily and the time had come to settle the actual date of the big August offensive.

The moon was due to rise about 2 a.m. on the 7th August, and a few days prior to that date the last of the reinforce-

Digitized by Google

ments, *i.e.*, the 53rd and 54th Divisions, were scheduled to reach Mudros. Therefore the first day of the big push was fixed for 6th August, but the *Braemar Castle*, bearing the 1/5th Bedfords, and other details of the 54th Division, did not arrive at Mudros until the morning of the 10th.

It was without part of his troops, therefore, that General Sir Ian Hamilton was compelled to launch his attack. It is not the place to describe here that battle in its entirety, but it is pitiful to think that the ardour which dashed itself to pieces against strong entrenchments and stubborn defenders on 6th August, would almost certainly have achieved its objective, could that attack have been delivered a month earlier, when the British forces had undoubtedly established mastery over the Turks, who had, however, in that month of respite, recovered their *morale*.

During the days that followed, bitter and most bloody warfare was waged continuously. One phase of the fighting which was to have a direct effect upon the welfare of the 5th Bedfords in the near future was the capture of the Lone Pine position by 2,000 Australian riflemen, supported only by two weak battalions, who carried that position in the face of a whole enemy division, and held it in a vice-like grip during six days of incessant counter-attacks.

How bitterly that position was contested is revealed by the fact that in one corner of a trench eight Turks and six Australians were found lying just as they had bayoneted each other; while the dead were ranged in rows on either side of the gangways to make room for the living, and, after the first blast of the counter-attacks had abated, over a thousand corpses—our own and the enemy's—were dragged from the trenches.

The British losses were terribly heavy, but the Lone Pine attack was a glorious success, because it drew all the local enemy reserves towards that position. This circumstance was a fortunate one for the 54th East Anglian Division, containing the 1/5th Bedfords, since it supplies the reason

Digitized by Google

why the subsequent landing of the Division at Suvla Bay was so lightly opposed.

During the night of the 8th–9th August, the 53rd (Welch) Territorial Division, comprising the General Reserve, arrived, disembarked and was ordered to reinforce the 11th Division. On 10th August a fresh attempt was made to capture the Anafarta Ridge. This attack was delivered over very difficult country by the 53rd Division, and was a tremendous trial for troops that were going into action for the first time; and, not unnaturally, they failed to achieve their objective.

On 11th August the 54th East Anglian Division (infantry only) arrived, were disembarked and placed in Reserve.

We must, however, go back for a moment to describe the experiences of the 1/5th Bedfords, upon arriving at the seat of war, before dealing with their landing at Suvla Bay.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER SIX

"WHAT WE TAKE WE HOLD!"

Suvla Bay Landing—Kidney Hill—First Casualties—The Yellow Devils

BEFORE the *Braemar Castle* disembarked the 1/5th Bedfords on Suvla Beach she came by way of Lemnos Island to Imbros.

Arrival at the seat of war made a vast impression upon the men who had trained so long, in preparation for that which now lay before them.

Here is an extract from the diary of Private C. W. Gelder, a reporter on the staff of the *Luton News*, who was serving with the 1/5th Bedfords:

"*Tuesday, 10th August.* We arrived at the island at about 9 a.m., and a fine display of armoured strength was presented by the collection of French and British battleships, destroyers and other shipping in the harbour. A submarine came in for special attention through our field glasses. We dropped mails here, and what a rush there was! It was the only connecting link with home and home seemed, somehow, to loom large in one's eyes as we sailed farther along to our fateful destination.

"We received orders to proceed to Imbros Island which was situated close by, reaching there about 3 p.m., and staying over night.

"During our voyage between these two islands we witnessed a terrific bombardment by both land and sea forces, and the flashing of the ship's guns, artillery and flares, combined with the illumination of the hospital

Digitized by Google

ships in the foreground and search-lights from the direction of Chanuk Bair, sweeping over the hills and sky, created a replica on a far greater scale of a Crystal Palace firework display in all its grandeur. But what a contrast! One display we remembered with admiration and pleasure, the other thrilled us with awe, as we spent a few hours on deck gazing at this awful panorama and imagining its unspeakable results. Well, we anchored in the bay and as evening drew into night it became extremely cold. Everywhere blackness and gloom. In this remote spot, under the lee of the island, it was difficult to realise that the distant roar of guns was dealing death and destruction, while many of us, apparently oblivious to any danger, were preparing to turn in with that usual composure so characteristic of the British Tommy."

From Mudros, then, the *Braemar Castle* steamed to Imbros, whence the sound of the guns from Gallipoli could be distinctly heard. Further actuality was given to the reality of war, as night fell and flashes of flame were seen intermittently in the darkness.

Just before daylight on Wednesday 11th August 1915, the *Braemar Castle* put in Suvla Bay and dropped her anchor as close in shore as possible.

The Division was then landed in armoured and petrol-driven lighters, while a Turkish aeroplane, circling above, strove to bomb the ships, but without success. At that time the beach was safe from hostile rifle fire, although still under shell fire.

The first officer of the 5th Bedfords to step ashore was Lieut.-Colonel Brighten. He landed at the same time as Major-General Inglefield, who had arrived in a Naval pinnace.

The Battalion was welcomed by a dud shell from the Turks, and history relates that its arrival sychronised with the sudden coming to ground of one of the Battalion signallers, who appeared to be the most surprised man in the world when he picked himself up and found that he was not only still alive but absolutely unscathed.

Digitized by Google

Landing was a long and tedious business, as both men and horses had to be got ashore, and it was not until 4 p.m. that the complete disembarkation was finally effected. When everything was ashore the men were allowed to snatch a hurried tea.

Then came the order to proceed inland and the Battalion now found itself in a stretch of flat country, interspersed by patches of sand and shingle, which was again broken up by short prickly scrub. This scrub soon grew denser, while the low foothills, through which the troops were marching, were covered with the same growth.

On the left flank rose a low range of hills, known as Kiretch Tepe Sirt, which was occupied by the 10th Irish Division. The position on the right of the line, along which the 54th Division was advancing, was already held by the 53rd (Welch) Division. Very soon the low foothills became steeper as they rose up towards the Turkish position. In that clear atmosphere the factory, mosque and other buildings in the village of Anafarta Sagir were plainly visible.

Some signs of cultivation remained and one or two rough habitations were seen; but these, of course, had long since been evacuated before the advance of the British troops. There was still a good deal of game about, such as pheasants, hares and numerous deer, which, to the men of Bedfordshire, seemed much thinner than those they had been accustomed to see in the Duke's park at Woburn Abbey. These deer, however, were very active and, subsequently, caused the Bedfords a good deal of trouble by startling their pickets at night.

It was said that in pre-war days this part of the Gallipoli Peninsula had provided sportsmen from Turkey, and even from Egypt, with a fair amount of excellent shooting.

Here and there olive groves flourished and scattered groups of pine trees were seen, and there were wells; but these contained only the smallest quantity of water and were at once picketed to prevent waste, nor was the

Digitized by Google

water allowed to be used for drinking purposes until it had been analysed.

The supply of water provided one of the great problems of the Gallipoli Campaign. It is, in fact, true that General Sir Ian Hamilton might, with every hope of success, have thrown the last of his Reserves into the stubborn central battle, which took place before the Bedfords arrived, but always the imminent question of water held him back from so doing. How urgent this matter really was may be gathered from the fact that, time and again, when the mules arrived with water *pak-hals* the men rushed to them, just to lick the water that had oozed through the canvas bags.

The march made by the 5th Bedfords on that first night of their landing on Gallipoli was but a short one. At the end of half a mile they were ordered to bivouac almost in open country and within sight of the sea. There was but little cover and shallow trenches had to be dug as a protection from shell fire. The ground was both stony and sun-baked and the hard digging went on, to the accompaniment of the whine and burst of shells overhead.

There had been a good deal of difficulty in landing the Quartermaster's stores, and a special funk hole was now constructed for the accommodation of at least part of his staff. Unfortunately it was never determined which part of the staff was entitled to occupy the hole, and a good deal of amusement was caused, as Turkish shells arrived from time to time, producing an undignified scramble, in which those who could get well into the hole at once did so, while the rest succeeded in getting their heads in, but left their latter ends sticking up in the air, for all the world like a herd of frightened ostriches.

At that time the line, some miles inland, was held by the troops that had been launched in the great attack of a few days earlier; from which the Bedfords had been precluded by the overdue arrival of the *Braemar Castle*. The Battalion remained, therefore, with the 54th Division in reserve.

Digitized by Google

After Reveille on the 12th, there was a bathing parade, which provided a welcome recreation, for the heat was terrific and every one's tropical drill thoroughly sweat-soaked. These bathing parades were not without their excitements, for the Turks shelled the bathing parties consistently, and although they caused no casualties, yet created, from time to time, a good deal of consternation amongst the men who were clad only in their pith helmets.

It is an extraordinary thing that there were no casualties during these bathing parades, for, on one occasion, some Turkish guns of large calibre ranging on the battleships, might have done more serious damage had they turned their attention to the foreshore, which was literally packed with naked men watching the bursting shells.

During the time the 54th Division was held in reserve, orders and counter-orders were issued almost hourly. One particular scheme was for a night march to be undertaken by the Division to the heights of Tekke Tepe. The 162nd Brigade was to furnish the Advance Guard, with the 1/5th Bedfords acting as Van Guard.

On the afternoon of the 12th, however, the 163rd Brigade marched out and, in spite of the most strenuous opposition, established itself about the "A" in Anafarta.

After this the scheme for the night-march by the 162nd Brigade was abandoned, principally because the Corps Commander could not see his way to keeping the Division supplied with food, water and other necessary things.

This was a momentous decision because General Birdwood was basing his ability to launch a fresh attack against Sari Bair upon the like ability of the 11th and 54th Divisions to project a correspondingly vigorous attack upon Ismail Oglu Tepe.

This project for a fresh attack from Anzac had to be abandoned, as General Birdwood found that he was only strong enough to help the 9th Corps, to which the 1/5th Bedfords belonged, with a reinforcement of one brigade. On the 14th therefore, the G.O.C. in C. directed General Stopford, the 9th Corps Commander, to confine

Digitized by Google

his attention to strengthening his line, and General Stopford, in his turn, issued orders for the 10th Division to advance on 15th August, and, with the co-operation of the 54th Division, to seize the crest of the Kiretch Tepe Sirt.

It was on the 14th, too, that the 1/5th Bedfords sustained their first casualties. These occurred when half the Battalion was digging reserve trenches under heavy shell fire. Lieut. Chaundler and Private Barton were both wounded. Upon that occasion the young officer from Biggleswade furnished a striking example of the splendid discipline which the Bedfords had built up through the long months of training in England. He sustained a most painful wound, and, although unable to stand, stuck to his post and continued to direct the work of his platoon until he was sent down to the first-aid dressing station, a hospital tent erected on the beach. His comrades did not see him again until he rejoined them for a time in Egypt, before being transferred to the Machine Gun Corps.

The men suffered much fatigue from the intense heat, while the extremely salt bully beef, which, with biscuit, comprised their ration, created an exasperating thirst. The officers in particular recalled, not without longing, the final Officers' Mess meeting held at St. Albans to discuss the momentous question of the extra supplies required by the Mess while on active service. At that meeting one officer had suggested that no wines or spirits need be ordered, as, in his experience, in whatever part of the world they might find themselves the wines of the country would be the most suitable. This had been agreed to at the time, but there were many who thought of the incident when they were on the Gallipoli Peninsula, where water itself was at a premium and wines of any sort were unprocurable.

None the less every one brightened up considerably when General Inglefield, G.O.C., 54th Division, visited the Battalion during the afternoon; for he brought the news that the time had come for the Bedfords to go into action.

Digitized by Google

Lieut.-Colonel Brighten supplemented the G.O.C.'s remarks, saying that it rested with every officer, N.C.O. and man in the Battalion to keep the honour of the Bedfordshire Regiment as bright in that particular hemisphere as the Regulars were doing on the blood-soaked plains of Flanders. Their motto, henceforth, would be, he said, "What we take we hold!"

That day ended with the men again digging trenches, but they could make but little progress, owing to the galling fire the Turks directed against them. Most of the time they lay huddled behind the earth they had thrown up. Towards morning they returned to their line tired out.

On Sunday 15th August General Stopford handed over the command of the 9th Corps to Major-General H. de B. de Lisle. At noon Officers commanding units of the 162nd Brigade were sent for to Brigade Headquarters and orders for an attack were issued.

According to the general scheme of the G.O.C., 9th Corps, the 30th and 31st Infantry Brigades of the 10th Division were to make a frontal attack along the high ridge. Brigadier-General de Winton's 162nd Infantry Brigade of the 54th Division was to support on the right.

The Infantry were to be supported by a Machine Gun Detachment of the Royal Naval Air Service, by the guns of H.M.S. *Grampus* and H.M.S. *Foxhound*, which were lying in the Gulf of Saros; by the Argyll Mountain Battery, the 15th Heavy Battery and the 58th Field Battery.

While the conference was in progress at Brigade Headquarters the troops were standing-to. No great amount of time was lost in long deliberations and by one o'clock the 5th Bedfords moved out at the head of the Brigade. They were very soon to come up against the Turks in occupation of a hill.

B Company, under the command of Captain C. T. Baker, son of the Rector of Dunstable, was posted on the right flank of the Battalion. Its orders were to keep touch with other troops taking part in the attack. A Company,

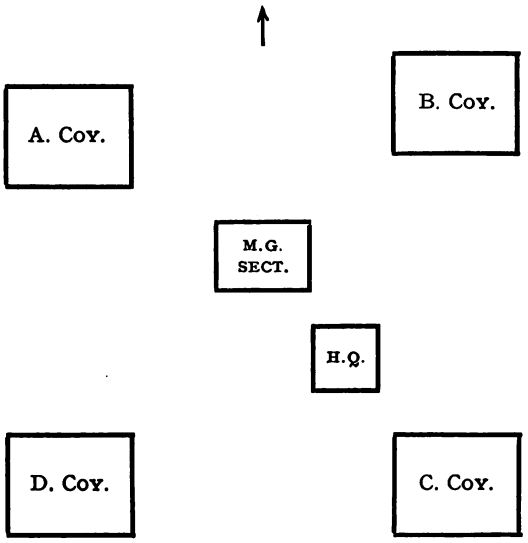
Digitized by Google

under Captain Brian Cumberland, of Luton, was extended back on the dangerous left flank, which had to be most carefully watched. The Machine Gun Section, commanded by Lieut. F. S. Shoosmith, was detailed to act in support of A Company.

Apart from the Base Details and First Line Reinforcements left in Alexandria, the Battalion was minus one platoon and one Machine Gun Section left to garrison the trenches that the Battalion had dug. This trench garrison was commanded by Lieut. H. E. Woodhouse.

The Regimental Headquarters Section followed in rear of the two leading companies, while C and D Companies, commanded by Captain W. K. Meakin and Captain R. Forrest, formed the Battalion Reserve.

The advance therefore was made in the following formation :—



The mental attitude of men going into action for the first time always provides a psychological study of absorbing interest. Some few letters, and one or two diaries, have come into my hands which deal frankly

Digitized by Google

with the feelings of men who went into that first battle the 5th Bedfords took part in. The following is typical of what was in the minds of the men as they tramped forward on that 15th August 1915:

"As we advanced up the hill," writes one man, "my thoughts, and I suppose those of most of the other fellows, turned to home and to the girls we had left behind us. These thoughts saddened me but they also strengthened my determination to do my duty to the utmost of my ability.

"But all thoughts of home were soon banished as we came under heavy rifle and shell fire. Men who had passed through previous campaigns, or were gifted with nerves of steel, might have viewed such a sight with cold-blooded calmness; but we boys who were advancing now under such awful fire might have been excused if our steadiness had deserted us. But, instead of shrinking as we saw our comrades fall, the sight rather braced up our strength to the sticking point and we forged ahead. We had the Colonel to thank for that, for he had driven it into our minds that the only way to protect our wounded would be by keeping our line intact and by holding the ground that we had taken."

The hill into which the Battalion bumped was very strongly held by the Turks. A, B, and C Companies were ordered to storm the position. They went to their work with a will and with that extraordinary verve which is so often characteristic of troops receiving their baptism of fire, and who do not as yet know the real meaning of wounds, and, also, of war-seasoned veterans who have seen so many wounds that they have become fatalists. Well as the leading companies attacked, however, it became obvious after a time that their strength was not sufficient for them to crown the hill and establish even a temporary position without further aid. D Company was at once flung in to support the charge. The whole line went at it again and this wave of brave, intrepid and well-disciplined men, only too anxious to blood

Digitized by Google

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R L

Digitized by Google

1

2

PL. XI.] GALLIPOLI, 1915. [*H* 99

1. Interrogating Turkish prisoners captured at Suvla. 2. The Prisoners of War Enclosure.

Digitized by Google

their steel, soon cleared the position at the point of the bayonet.

There was a brief pause for reorganisation before the Battalion was launched against Kidney Hill, its second objective. Up to this time the casualties had not been particularly heavy, but the next hill to be carried was to prove a far more formidable obstacle.

To reach its objective the Battalion had to cross an open stretch of land, about a quarter of mile in depth; and they lost heavily, and yet not so heavily as might have been expected.

It was in this stage of the advance and during the further assault that the 5th Bedfords earned their nickname of the "Yellow Devils."

For long enough the origin of this distinctly proud title has been obscure. Many have been suggested, most of them too absurd to bear investigation. It is a fact, however, that after the fighting at Suvla Bay the Battalion was quite well known by its nickname, which was heard on all sides. As this fighting covered only a period of about ten days it follows that the origin occurred within that period. The consensus of opinion and the available evidence suggest it to be as follows:—

The Battalion landed at Suvla wearing an inverted amber triangle as a "flash," or distinguishing mark. These flashes were worn at the top of the sleeves, just below the point of the shoulder, and on the *puggaree* at the back of the helmet. Amber was chosen because it is one of the Regimental colours. The officers, in addition, wore the flash below the collar of all their coats. The Battalion went into its first fight in Battle Order, with the haversack taking the place of the pack between the shoulders and the men had attached to their haversacks small inverted tin triangles, with the bright side showing, as a guide to the Gunners, who would see the sun flashing from these pieces of tin, as to the position of the Battalion.

During the action of 15th August, it is said that a Staff Officer, watching the progress of the attack through his

Digitized by Google 515934 A

field glasses, was struck by the steady advance of a Battalion marked with what appeared to him at that distance as spots of yellow, and he said: "By Jove! If we had only one or two more battalions of those Yellow Devils we should be across the Peninsula to-morrow."

This was a nickname well earned and it was to stick to the Battalion, not only during the time they were on Gallipoli, but right through the subsequent campaign in Palestine, where the name of the Yellow Devils was to become yet more famous and where, too, they were to achieve the signal honour of a successful action from which the Division was to take its own sign.

Any accurate account in detail of the action of 15th August 1915 is rendered almost impossible by the nature of the country in which that action was fought. Small, precipitous hills, immense boulders and tangled thickets of scrub made observation and the preservation of direction alike matters of the utmost difficulty.

A Company, splendidly led by Captain Brian Cumberland, had borne the brunt of the fighting in the taking of the first objective. As already stated, there was a short pause in the captured position while fresh orders were issued for the attack upon the next objective. As soon as the second advance started the Battalion came under heavy shrapnel fire from the Turkish guns in front and was harassed by galling rifle fire from the right flank. Many severe casualties resulted.

Direction was soon lost, and the cohesion of the Battalion, as a unit, stood in serious danger of disappearing altogether. It was then that Major J. E. Hill and the Adjutant, Captain H. Younghusband, performed prodigies of valour, as they moved from place to place maintaining, or re-establishing, touch between the companies and platoons. People who saw their work that day have since stated that these two officers seemed to pass and repass through the zone of fire like men who bore charmed lives.

The Headquarters Section came in for a very rough time; and shell after shell fell among, or burst above, them.

Digitized by Google

Lieut. F. W. Ballance, of Dunstable, the Battalion Signalling Officer, and Lieut. L. J. Hunter were wounded, while the men were going down fast. In spite of all, the attack was pushed forward with dour determination. Then came the news that Brigadier-General de Winton, commanding the 162nd Brigade, was himself a casualty. Wounded though he was, the Brigadier issued orders for two more battalions to move up to the support of the Yellow Devils. Before these reinforcements could arrive the Bedfordshire men had achieved their objective and Kidney Hill was in our hands. They had advanced against that position through a veritable hell of fire, and they had cleared it at the point of the bayonet. Again the casualties were heavy, but not so heavy as those of the Turks who had been mastered.

As the last advance was made Captain C. T. Baker, his arm completely shattered, went on at the head of his Company until he fell mortally wounded; Lieut. C. R. Lydekker, of Harpenden, also went down, while an eye-witness has described how Captain Brian Cumberland called on his Company for the last charge up the crest and, in the act of waving them on, was shot through the head. Almost in the same moment the Colonel's brother, Lieut. Ralph Brighten, commanding No. 1 Platoon A Company, was killed; nor were those all the casualties among the officers. Lieut. C. R. James, the Colonel's brother-in-law, was shot through the leg, Lieut. G. R. Day sustained a severe head wound, while Lieuts. W. S. Chirnside and J. T. Yarde, although both badly hit, managed somehow to carry on through the remainder of the attack and, further than that they insisted upon sticking to the Battalion until it was subsequently relieved. No one knows when Captain W. K. Meakin, commanding C Company, was killed; although he is believed to have led his men almost up to the last moment when they got busy with their bayonets. The body of Lieut. Derek Rising who was, at first, reported "wounded and missing," but afterwards "believed killed," was never recovered.

Digitized by Google

It was a great and glorious charge but the position was won at terrible cost. The whole advance had been made with bayonets fixed, and when the final stage was reached and the order to charge rang out the men dashed onward to the attack. The fire of the enemy caused great gaps in their ranks, but no man hesitated for an instant, and those who had not already fallen swept forward with irresistible impetuosity. There was no stopping these unblooded British troops; London, Essex and Bedford Territorials charged together, but the men of the 5th Bedfords outstripped the regiments on their right and left and dashed into the lead, causing the line to form a crescent, and sweeping everything before them. Turks went down before the cold steel in hundreds and those who were not killed turned and fled, without any thought of attempting to carry off their own casualties. But, when the darkness shut down, it was a very thin British line that began to consolidate the position.

The Battalion had lost more than three hundred killed and wounded, and many a promising lad had laid down his life, but the 1/5th Bedfords made good and won undying honour for themselves and for their county. It is not too much to say that they bore themselves in a truly remarkable manner, having regard to the fact that they were fighting their first action.

D Company, which had been in support in the first phase of the action, got off rather more lightly than the rest, although Captain R. Forrest re-opened an old wound and Captain E. V. Andreini went down with sunstroke.

Particularly notable in this action was the conduct of Lieut. F. S. Shoosmith. Nearly all the N.C.O.'s and men of his Machine Gun Section were knocked out; but still, with only one man to aid him, he fought his guns with the greatest gallantry, simply sweeping the ground ahead and clearing the way for the advance of his comrades.

Major J. E. Hill, who was ubiquitous throughout the action, at once saw the straits to which the Machine Gun Section was reduced, and, going across to Shoosmith, he asked: "Who is to fight the gun if you get knocked out?

Digitized by Google

No one else knows enough about it up here; your section is gone, and you had better show me how to do it." The breezy answer he received from young Shoosmith was: "Oh, you just pull this and press that! It's quite simple." And during this conversation, mark you, Shoosmith was pumping hell into the Turks.

Night fell, just as the hill was captured, and found the remnants of three battalions all mixed up together; but desperately weary though the men were, they turned to at once and dug themselves in.

One can hardly hope to make those readers who did not serve on Gallipoli realise the extraordinary difficulties which characterised the fighting in that country. At one stage of the advance against Kidney Hill, for example, it was difficult to muster more than a hundred men. Many of the others had got isolated into little parties and really fought on their own. One such party was ably led by C.S.M. A. Milton and one Company finished up with a private soldier in command, all its officers and N.C.O.'s being casualties. This was Private H. Bryant, who was, later, awarded the D.C.M. for his gallantry upon this occasion.

The consolidation of the Kidney Hill position followed upon its capture. Apart from the fact that the nature of the ground rendered trench digging most difficult, it must be remembered that such officers and N.C.O.'s as remained had the immensely difficult task of sorting out not only platoons and companies, but also the remnants of whole battalions of men who had never been in action before, and who had, therefore, but little knowledge, and absolutely no experience of rallying and reorganising after the delivery of a successful assault.

Here the experience of the Adjutant, Captain Younghusband, was as invaluable as his energy was, apparently, inexhaustible. He collected all the details of platoons that were left and, with them, formed some sort of a defensive line. Meanwhile Major J. E. Hill had taken charge of the advanced units. During the advance

Digitized by Google

the Commanding Officer had spotted a convenient fold in the ground, some fifty yards in rear of what was now the defensive line established by the Adjutant. In this natural depression Headquarters was at once established, and here men were collected as they arrived and organised into fatigue parties for consolidation work. Meanwhile other sections were collecting the wounded, whom they brought into Headquarters to await the arrival of a field ambulance, which succeeded ultimately in getting the whole of them away during the night.

Meanwhile the battle was still raging on both sides of Kidney Hill and there must have been some twenty thousand Turkish rifles opposed to us, when the Bedfords settled down to hang on to the line they had won, with a grim determination which would have done credit to well-seasoned regular troops.

The period that followed was full of curious incidents. Upon one occasion, when there was a lull in the fighting, which went on almost continuously by day and by night, the Commanding Officer overheard some men of the Signal Section discussing miraculous escapes. The old story of a Bible stopping a bullet, of course, cropped up. Lieut.-Colonel Brighten smiled and, turning to one of the men, said: "Well, Cook, I am sure you never carry a Bible and so your life will never be saved in that way." Signaller Cook, however, protested that he always carried his Bible, and, in proof of this assertion, pulled it out of his pocket; when, to every one's amazement, it was seen that a bullet was actually embedded in the little khaki-covered Testament.

During the time that the Bedfords held on to their position, parties had to be sent out to perform various duties. At one time the Signalling Corporal, Corporal E. King, was sent with two men to relieve a signalling station. They were given sufficient rations to last them for six hours, at the end of which time they were told that they would be relieved, but that they were not to quit their post until the relief did arrive. By some means

Digitized by Google

this small signalling station became completely isolated, either through the wires being cut by shell fire or disconnected in some other manner. For seventy-two hours, instead of six, Corporal King and his two comrades occupied the outpost, each man taking his turn at watching by night and of going out foraging at dawn and dusk for biscuits, bully beef or anything else they could pick up, which by any stretch of imagination could be regarded as food fit for human consumption. After this party had been out for three days and three nights an officer of another battalion in charge of half a company halted, as he was passing by, to make an enquiry about the signalling post. Having been answered, he said that he thought that Corporal King and his two men had better go along with him. This the Corporal was willing to do, if the officer would detail enough of his own men to help the signallers to clear the station of its telephones, wires, flags and other signalling equipment. This the officer did and shortly afterwards Corporal King was able to report back to Headquarters of the 5th Bedfords with his command and kit intact.

On the night of the 15th August the Bedfords found themselves more or less isolated in the position they had won. That position they were destined to hold for another forty-eight hours, until they were withdrawn a short distance upon the line being straightened out. Even this re-arrangement brought them no relief. The Bedfords, in fact, stayed in the firing line until troops of the 29th Division took over from them on 22nd August. Before that relief came the men were to endure six long days in a living hell.

At dawn on Monday 16th August more entrenchments had to be made ; and a very dangerous task it was, for the work had to be carried out in full view of the Turks. Headquarters was fixed up in a sort of natural ditch and this gulley was fortified, partly as Headquarters and partly as a support trench. The signallers, whose work was excellent, quickly completed the laying of the telephone

Digitized by Google

line from Battalion to Brigade Headquarters. It was lucky that they lost no time in so doing, for the Turks were soon sending over shell after shell in the hope of driving out the Bedfords.

From this constant bombardment the Battalion endured much, but their sufferings in that respect were as nothing in comparison with the plight of the men as regards rations and water. The bully beef was very salt and, in that climate, often none too good, while the biscuits were very much worm-eaten. In some cases the men were so parched with thirst and their tongues so dry that strong steps had to be taken to prevent them from drinking the oil out of their rifle oil bottles. The sufferings of Tantalus, too, were theirs. At some earlier stage in the Gallipoli Campaign the Turkish Engineers had dug a well, which was now in sight of the position held by the Battalion; but it was also in the direct line of fire from the enemy's guns. Despite that circumstance and the ever-present example of the fate of others, men, who could endure the torment of thirst no longer, crawled out to get one long, delicious, cooling drink from that well; but most of them paid with their lives for the slaking of their thirst.

There was, too, the ever-present anxiety as to when the next counter attack would be delivered. Shells rained down incessantly, and always the signs of activity in the Turkish trenches suggested that the enemy was about to launch a fresh attack. That they did not do so was probably due to the intense vigilance of Lieut. Shoosmith. Every time the Turks got their heads up above their own parapet this indefatigable officer let rip such a hail of machine gun bullets as served to send every Turkish scalp ducking swiftly for shelter.

It was during the 16th August that Lieut. E. L. Rawlins saw a wounded man lying out in the open, where he was not only exposed to the enemy's fire, but was suffering tortures under the blazing sun. Rawlins made his arrangements very quietly and then went out to fetch

Digitized by Google

the man in. He was himself hit before he could effect a rescue and was later brought in by Private Bell, who showed the greatest gallantry in going over the top and was subsequently promoted Company Quartermaster Sergeant.

There was, at all times, the greatest difficulty in getting water, rations and ammunition up to the front line. The coast was, roughly, three-and-a-half miles in rear of the Battalion position and every inch of the way lay open to hostile fire. The country was impracticable for motor lorries, nor could the mules and fatigue parties be brought up by day. It was tried once, but the whole carrying party went sky-high and the experiment was not repeated.

Monday night was one of comparative calm and the Battalion frontage was re-arranged. A and B Companies, which had been holding the front line, were withdrawn to dig support trenches in rear of Headquarters and the wounded were evacuated. Among those taken down to the Hospital was Lieut. W. S. Chirnside, whose gallantry was rewarded with the Military Cross and commemorated by the following announcement in the *London Gazette* :—

LIEUT. (temp. CAPTAIN) WILLIAM STUART CHIRNSIDE.
1/5TH BN. THE BEDFORDSHIRE REGT. (T.F.)

" For conspicuous courage on the Gallipoli Peninsula from 15th to 17th August 1915. He led his men with great gallantry, and in spite of being wounded he remained two days at his post, until relieved and taken to hospital. By his fine example and courage he assisted in keeping up the spirits and *morale* of his men."

As stated already, Major Chirnside subsequently enjoyed a distinguished career in France, where he gained a bar to his Military Cross and rose to command the 1st (Regular) Battalion.

While the wounded were being evacuated search parties went out under cover of the darkness and, with the dawn light breaking in the East, the dead were buried.

" I helped," says one of these searchers, " to lay the

Digitized by Google

body of Captain Brian Cumberland to rest. He was a splendid officer and popular with his men. As we lowered his body into the crude grave that had been hastily dug, I thought what an insignificant resting place it was for such a splendid officer. And yet, all of us believed that he would not have wished for anything else, as a memorial to his supreme sacrifice, other than the rough wooden cross we raised, with its simple inscription: 'Captain B. C. Cumberland, 1/5th Bedfordshire Regt.,' and the date."

On Tuesday night A and B Companies again took over the front line, but before that was effected the Roll was called and it then appeared that between three hundred and four hundred all ranks were either dead, wounded or missing. The revised Roll Call, obtained later, indicated however that things were not quite so bad as had been feared at first. The actual figures were :—

	Killed.	*Wounded.*	*Missing.*	*Total.*
Officers	4	8	2	14
Other Ranks ...	39	199	29	267
	43	207	31	281

The fighting continued, so far as the 5th Bedfords were concerned, until the following Friday, and, during that time, Lieut. Shoosmith in command of the Machine Gun Section performed prodigies of valour. All his section were killed or wounded but he stuck to his gun until he received the fatal message, through Corporal Signaller E. King, telling him to report to Headquarters. In carrying out the order he was shot through the head and died where he fell.

By the time the Bedfords were relieved on the following Sunday every one was feeling the strain acutely and the Battalion was, therefore, glad to return to its old camp by the shore, where bathing parades were resumed. About this time Captain Maier developed dysentery and was taken to hospital and it was on the Sunday, too, that the First Line Reinforcements arrived from Alexandria under

Digitized by Google

Captain Smythe and Lieut. Hobbs. Captain Smythe was extraordinarily unlucky, for he fell mortally wounded within a few days of landing upon the Peninsula and died in hospital on the 13th September.

The Battalion was then allowed a brief period of "rest," which in reality meant heaps of fatigues and plenty of shelling. Despite these circumstances the men revelled in their bathing and when they were not actually in the water lay about all day long on the beaches, under awnings made of blankets.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER SEVEN

ANZAC AND AFTER

Trench Warfare—Dysentery—The Evacuation of Gallipoli

WHEN General de Lisle took over the command of the 9th Corps from General Stopford, his first task was that of restoring his command to fighting shape, for a fresh attack upon Ismail Oglu Tepe and the Anafarta Spur.

At this time the Turks were in great strength. They held all the advantage of the ground, were well provisioned and watered, well supplied with munitions of war, and, moreover, the reinforcing drafts they were constantly receiving were of a far higher quality than our leaders had anticipated. On the other side of the picture it must be remembered that autumn was drawing on; and, of the Allied forces, the British divisions alone were 45,000 rifles under strength, some of the best fighting battalions had dwindled to mere skeletons, and, although Sir Ian Hamilton could have cleared the road to Constantinople with an additional 50,000 rifles, it was now obvious that no further reinforcements could be sent from England.

Meanwhile the Turks were continually strengthening their positions, and the British stood in danger of losing the very appreciable amount of ground which had been gained in the general action in which the Bedfords took part on the 14th–15th August.

There was only one thing for it—and that a further mass attack against the Turkish position. The 53rd and 54th Divisions were detailed to hold the enemy from Sulajik and Kiretch Tepe Sirt, while the 29th and 11th Divisions were to storm Ismail Oglu Tepe.

Digitized by Google

At 2 p.m. on the afternoon of Friday 20th August, the preliminary bombardment began and the Bedfords, from their trenches, witnessed the shelling of Hill 70. They could see clearly the devastation our guns were causing, for the shrubbery, dried up in the terrific heat, was soon set ablaze, providing a grand but awe-inspiring spectacle. Through their glasses, they saw their British comrades advancing in artillery formation up Chocolate Hill. Then came orders for the Bedfords to prepare to advance if the Chocolate Hill position was carried. Meanwhile, they redoubled their supporting fire and, in consequence, drew a hot return fire from the Turks; but they succeeded in holding the enemy pinned to his trenches.

It was at about this time that Lieut. Shoosmith, a very tall officer, was killed as he passed along the trenches with his head showing above the parapet, to answer a summons from Battalion Headquarters.

The assault troops were now into the Chocolate Hill position, and making the most deadly use of their bayonets. In rear, the Bedfords, eager for another smack at the enemy, crouched behind their parapet. But before the order for them to advance was given the Turkish guns turned a heavy enfilade fire upon our troops, who were driven back with terrible losses.

Throughout that night, Chocolate Hill ran red with blood, as it was taken and retaken, but the British had never the reserve force to hold the position they so often won. For four days the Bedfords waited in reserve in One Tree Gulley, not more than a hundred yards behind the firing line; but on the next Sunday the 29th Division took over the whole sector and a few days later the 5th Bedfords were ordered round to Lala Baba. The march was to be carried out by night, and while it was in progress Major Mudge, of the Queen's Regiment, who had been acting as D.A.Q.M.G. 52nd Division, was sent round from Helles, and took over the command of the 162nd Brigade on the march over the sandy plain to Anzac.

It seems curious to recollect now that for some time

Digitized by Google

after he assumed command the new Brigadier still wore his major's badges.

Lala Baba was some four miles distant from the beach where the Bedfords had been resting. It was a short march, but a hard one. Every foot of the way the Battalion was subjected to Turkish rifle fire. The men, who were still tired from ten days of continuous fighting, felt the weight of full marching order and of the two hundred and forty rounds of ammunition which each man carried in addition to his rations. The line of march lay across the bed of the Big Salt Lake, which is dried up in summer. As the troops crossed it the men sank up to their knees in the sand and dozens fell out. Lala Baba was reached in the middle of the night and then came the order, " Dig yourselves in." It seemed a bit hard, but the order was cheerfully carried out, for every one realised the need of providing cover for themselves, since their resting place was open to the Turkish gunners. The next day was 28th August, when the Battalion marched another five miles and joined up with the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps.

The Bedfords had snatched only one night's real sleep in their alleged " rest " period of seven days ; and yet there was very little grousing. The Yellow Devils, in fact, had trained long and arduously in England, they had received their baptism of fire on Suvla Beach, had proved their courage on Kidney Hill, and their steady discipline in the support trenches by One Tree Gulley. They were now by way of becoming seasoned warriors. Not all their courage, however, could save them from the awful effects of the climate and only the fortitude to endure remained.

The excessive heat was the first circumstance that tried them sorely ; but bad flies and worse water, combined with short rations, were to have more devastating effects among them than Turkish shells and bullets. Presently dysentery broke out. In Anzac the men at first enjoyed the change from bully beef and biscuits to the Maconochie Ration, which was at that time a novelty to them.

Digitized by Google

Then followed weeks of trench warfare, during which period the Battalion certainly did not put on flesh.

A few days after the new position at Anzac was taken over, the Adjutant was wounded in the knee, as he stood talking to Corporal King, of the Signalling Section. Capt. Younghusband was furiously angry about this wound, for it meant that he would have to be evacuated as a casualty; and every one regretted his going, for he had proved himself a most efficient and popular Adjutant, and he had been with the Battalion since before the outbreak of war.

For his services on Gallipoli Major Younghusband received the D.S.O., and was mentioned in despatches. He was invalided home, and, when recovered from his wound, ordered to proceed to Mesopotamia to take over the command of a battalion of the Gloucestershire Regiment, and promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel. Shortly after taking over this battalion he was killed in action.

The trenches occupied by the Battalion at Anzac ran along the top of a ridge, and, although they were at one end separated by more than a quarter of a mile from the Turkish trenches, the Left Sap, as it was called, was very close to an enemy position known as Sandbag Ridge, and considerable care had to be taken at this post to avoid showing any movement. There was usually a fixed rifle trained by the Turks on to the Sap, and a shot came over whenever signs of life were detected.

One evening the enemy had been busy with fresh barbed wire at Sandbag Ridge, and it was here, whilst Lieut. Orlebar was pointing out the enemy activity to his Company Commander, that he was wounded in the shoulder, and was subsequently evacuated to England. He afterwards joined the Royal Flying Corps, and was in command of the British team which competed successfully for the Schneider Trophy in 1929.

Nothing on a big scale was attempted while the Battalion was at Anzac. The work was mainly of a routine nature, the nights being spent in patrolling No Man's Land. From

Digitized by Google

the trenches the men could see the sea, with a hospital ship usually lying off Anzac Point. This ship, too, was generally visible to the enemy; but, to their credit, it should be stated that no deliberate attempts were made by the Turks to fire upon her. From time to time, however, a gun, commonly known as "Asiatic Annie," at the Chanak Fort, on the Asiatic side of the Dardanelles, sent over a shell, in the hopes of catching one of our supply ships, and the tired droning sound of these shells, as they neared their destination, became very familiar to the Battalion. Mount Athos in Greece, although about a hundred miles away, was usually in sight, and, when the visibility was very good, the Grecian coast line could be clearly seen.

Dysentery very soon became rampant in the ranks and claimed many victims; but there is every reason to believe that in this respect the Turks suffered equally with the British. After things had settled down a bit the rations became better, particularly by comparison with what the Battalion had experienced in its earlier days, but the lack of vegetables was acutely felt by all.

Static warfare brings about its own observances, and at Anzac it became a well recognised custom that every one should rest each afternoon between two and four o'clock, only one man being left on duty at each point. Boots were taken off and all was peace on that particular front. There is no doubt that the Turks respected this custom as religiously as did our own men; and, in the heat of the day, the respite was appreciated by all. Occasionally Turkish or German aeroplanes winged their way overhead, and there were times when the Battalion was subjected to sharp shrapnel fire; but, on the whole, machine gun and rifle fire predominated and any vulnerable spot in our lines was soon detected. Loop-holes were placed at every point of vantage, but these had to be cleverly camouflaged, if they were to escape the attention of the vigilant Turkish snipers.

The Australian Corps lay on the right of the Battalion and most of the officers and N.C.O.'s of the Bedfords had

Digitized by Google

1

2

PL. XII.] EGYPT, 1916. [*H* 114

ON DESERT COLUMN.

1. The Bir. 2. Well X.

Digitized by Google

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
K L

Digitized by Google

opportunities of inspecting the Australian trenches. At one or two points, notably Russell Rise, they were only a few yards from the enemy lines; and, as bombing, at this point, was of frequent occurrence, the trench was covered over with close mesh wire netting, sloped so as to let the bombs roll off if possible before they exploded. The Australians were in the habit of kindling cooking fires in their trenches at all hours of the day or night, but upon being asked if it was safe to do this they replied that it could not possibly matter as the Turks knew exactly where our lines were situated.

For much of this period glorious weather prevailed, and the olives growing on the slope at the back of the British trench system began to ripen and to fall into the little dug-outs, which were usually nothing much better than a hole in the bank, covered over with a waterproof sheet. As the weather improved flies became more numerous than ever, and at dawn each day the trenches were literally black with these infernal pests. They got into the food and tea, and it was almost impossible to keep a pot of jam once it was opened.

Just as static warfare breeds observances, so strange legends spring up around, and are associated with particular systems of trenches which are occupied for any length of time. For instance, every man who was at Anzac will remember the famous story of the Phantom White Horse and its daring rider. Even after all these years one doubts if that phenomenon has been explained to every one's entire satisfaction. There seems to be, however, good reason for believing that an Australian, mounted on a white horse, ran the gauntlet every evening as he rode with dispatches from Anzac Beach to Suvla Bay. His appearance was looked for daily with much interest. From all accounts he rode at a breakneck speed along the beach, and, although frequently fired on, he was never hit.

From the time the Battalion arrived in the Anzac Command, right up to the evacuation of the Peninsula, they were constantly in the trenches, doing, as a rule, five

Digitized by Google

days in and five days out. As time went on they became weaker and weaker, owing to wounds and dysentery. The latter disease soon began to get a serious hold of the Battalion, which, apart from a couple of dozen men, received no reinforcements of any kind. Rest also, apart from the brief afternoon respite, was more nominal than real. Even when the men were out of the line they were continuously under rifle fire, and it was almost impossible to get any proper rest or relief.

One phrase that appears with monotonous regularity in the diaries kept at this period is " Improved trenches." There is not much sinister meaning in these two little words to the layman and the war profiteer, perhaps ; but they must conjure up a whole series of memories to " the man who has had some."

In most cases that sort of job could only be done at night, owing to the nearness of the enemy. It is a " scarey " job, in any case, and at the very best means the loss of a night's sleep to the men employed. But, if brother Turk put up a Verey light and turned on his machine guns, it generally resulted in some poor beggar losing the number of his mess.

By the beginning of September, dysentery had reduced the strength of the Battalion to about 400 all ranks, and that meant double duty for those who were left. Then again, the Turkish snipers, crack shots every one of them, were particularly active in that sector. Every night parties went out in search of these enemy experts, who daily claimed their toll. In many cases the snipers were found, cunningly hidden in snug corners, well stocked with stores, ammunition galore and water. The shrift they were given was a very short one.

On 5th September, the Wesleyan Chaplain, the Rev. J. Sullings, conducted the first service the Battalion had held on the Peninsula. The troops assembled behind some scanty cover and the service took place with the bullets whining overhead all the while.

The next day things brightened up considerably when

Digitized by Google

the first mails the troops had received since leaving England were distributed ; but a woeful number of letters and parcels had to be marked for return or forwarding : " Killed in Action," " Wounded," " Missing," or " Hospital."

At the end of the month the lads enjoyed the first bread and meat ration issued to them since their arrival on the Peninsula, and on the 19th welcomed the first reinforcing draft from the 2/5th Bedfords in England.

This month was notable also for the issue of some ordinary khaki serge clothing. It was welcome, too, because, at that time, the nights were just as cold as the days were hot.

If there was not much fighting while the Battalion was at Anzac there were still many unpleasant duties to perform. For instance, those of the burial and search parties, which went out night by night, and as late as mid-September were still dealing with the corpses of the fallen of the Chocolate Hill action of nearly a month earlier. Of this work one Bedfordshire Private wrote :—

" I was one of a burial and search party last night. What a grim, horrible task that is. At one place we came across four bodies of men of different nationalities. They had, evidently, been stretched stark just where we found them for some weeks, and their bodies were hideous to look upon. I suppose they had been killed in the first great attack upon Chocolate Hill. There was a private of a county Territorial regiment, a Colonial, a Ghurka and a Turk, all with their bayonets fixed—except the Ghurka, who had his bloodthirsty looking *kukri* drawn. They were all within a yard of one another and we buried them together."

There were many such graves. As the men marched across the plain near Chocolate Hill, the scene of such brave, heroic fighting, they realised what a gallant part the Australians and New Zealanders had played in the Gallipoli struggle.

During the time the Battalion was at Anzac, a perfectly beastly contraption for throwing bombs by catapult was

Digitized by Google

issued, and the Battalion was ordered to experiment with it. It was for all the world like a boy's " twigger," and among its many demerits was the fact that any strain placed upon the elastic set the weird machinery groaning loud enough to give the Turks ample warning of what was about to happen. As their trenches were no more than eighty yards distant from the part of the British line where the catapult was set up they heard only too plainly the catapultists getting ready, and the moment this modern mangonel began to creak and groan over came a heavy rain of hostile shells; so that the Battalion scouts, to whose care the devilish instrument had been committed, rather lost their popularity with their comrades. Upon the other hand, it must be admitted that the scouts seemed to work a good deal of havoc among the Turkish ranks.

There were many patrol encounters. A little post, which became known as Bulgar Bluff, was occupied, in turn, by patrols of both sides, and was the scene almost every night of the most bloody hand-to-hand fighting. The Bedfords' trenches were, at first, open to enfilade fire and, through this circumstance, many casualties were suffered. This fire came mainly from Sandbag Ridge. The Battalion, however, soon instituted a sniper section, who quickly got the upper hand of the Turkish riflemen, and so that trouble ceased.

By the beginning of October, even the men realised, as they looked up each day at an impregnable position which was the key to the situation, that our chances of forcing the Dardanelles by strength of arms were rapidly dwindling. Tens of thousands of lives had been poured out in the attempt to force a passage across those five miles of God-forsaken country and still the key to the Narrows remained in the hands of the Turks. The men themselves said openly that they could still stand up to shot and shell, but could not fight against the dread disease of dysentery, which had them firmly in its grip. Every one realised that if another general advance was ordered not a single sound man would reach the Turkish trenches. And so it was that

Digitized by Google

the Battalion was found, still carrying on, by the twenty-one N.C.O.'s and men, all old comrades, who returned from Egypt on 5th October. This draft was made up of men wounded on 15th August, who had been first of all in hospital at Malta, from which place they had been sent across to Alexandria as convalescents. The Battalion had now lost best part of 500 all ranks, and the C.O. put it plainly to the survivors that no man must think of reporting sick, so long as he could stand on his feet. The men responded nobly and the heroism they displayed and the way they backed up their officers was little short of miraculous.

On 15th August, they had done many splendid things in the heat and excitement of a well fought action, but the splendour of the most heroic deed of that day pales almost to the level of a mundane thing beside the heroism of the men who carried on—digging trenches in torrential rain, performing the normal fatigues of trench life or wandering in the bitter cold of a Gallipoli night in search of dead comrades. And let it not be forgotten that the men who did these things were so rotten with dysentery that for many of them every hour that passed was a separate living hell.

But, despite all their sufferings, there was not one of them who was not glad that he had stuck it out when the orders came at the end of November for the Battalion to leave the Peninsula and go to Mudros. At that time it was believed that they were being pulled out of the line merely to rest and refit. There was a good deal of disappointment but very little grumbling when these orders were cancelled at the last moment. There was a terrible blizzard that night with a very heavy fall of snow and until the 3rd of December the Battalion hung on to its line in horrible conditions. The next morning the Battalion left for Mudros on board the S.S. *El Kahirah*, and the general evacuation of the Gallipoli Peninsula, which was to prove one of the most masterly achievements in the long annals of military history, had begun.

Digitized by Google

The Battalion did not stay long at Mudros for, on the 14th December 1915, they went aboard the S.S. *Alaunia* and sailed for Egypt.

In February 1916 no little pleasure was afforded to the people of Bedfordshire when they learned that Brigadier-General Chas. de Winton, who went out to Gallipoli with the Bedfords in the *Braemar Castle* as Brigadier of the 162nd East Midland Brigade of the 54th Division, and was there wounded, had been appointed G.O.C. 74th Division and made a Companion of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George. The C.M.G. was conferred also upon Lieut.-Colonel Edgar Brighten, at that time one of the youngest commanding officers in the British Army, in recognition of his fine leadership of the 5th Battalion The Bedfordshire Regt., during the perilous and disastrous Dardanelles adventure. Major Harold Younghusband, who had served for ten years in the Bedfordshire Regiment and as Adjutant of the 5th Battalion up to the time he was wounded, was also decorated. He was mentioned with Lieut.-Colonel Brighten in Sir Ian Hamilton's final Gallipoli despatch and was awarded the D.S.O.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER EIGHT

EGYPT—1916

The Suez Canal Defences—With the Desert Columns Christmas Sports

THE evacuation of the Gallipoli Peninsula by the Allied Forces left the Turks with a very inflated impression of their own prowess. This was not unnatural when one considers the circumstances. They had captured a British Force at Kut in Mesopotamia, and forced the Allies to evacuate Gallipoli and they had the Russian Campaign in Armenia well in hand.

Following upon their successes at the Dardanelles, at Ctesiphon, and at Kut the Turks decided to aim a further, and they hoped a shrewder, blow at the British by a second invasion of Egypt in overwhelming force. The previous attack upon the Suez Canal had proved abortive, but the attempt had at least shown that determined troops, even when hampered with heavy artillery, could cross the Sinai Desert.

The importance of the Suez Canal was well realised by both sides. It was, in fact, the nerve centre of the whole British Empire, since it supplied the connecting link with the East. If Turkey could close this door, then, the Persian Gulf would be cut off and Australia, New Zealand and the Indian Empire would experience great difficulties in sending troops to serve on the Western Front.

But Egypt, at that time, was full of troops and held, in fact, the Strategic Reserve of the whole Empire, and that Reserve was being constantly strengthened by the influx of fresh troops.

Digitized by Google

Many of the troops, then in Egypt, were required, however, for service on other fronts, and the problem remained of determining the minimum strength that would suffice to preserve the safety of Egypt. In November 1915 Lord Kitchener had inspected and condemned the whole plan of the Suez Canal defences and in December General Horne arrived to select a fresh defensive line.

The line chosen was located to the east of the Canal, which was to be kept immune from artillery fire, and there was to be a second line mid-way between the first line and the Canal. A series of fortified bridgeheads, actually on the Canal, were to furnish the strong points of the third and final line.

The plan necessitated the digging, wiring, and revetting of miles of trenches in ever-shifting sand, the building of light railways and metalled roads, and the construction and laying of pipe lines. Much of this work was done by the newly-organised Egyptian Labour Corps, but in it, and also in the defence of the Canal area, the 1/5th Bedfords were destined to play their part. On 18th December the Battalion disembarked from the S.S. *Alaunia* at Alexandria, whence they had sailed on the 7th of the preceding August for the Dardanelles aboard the *Braemar Castle*.

They had set out a fit, fighting battalion, eager for action ; they ret urned utterly worn out by their services on Gallipoli and with their strength reduced to less than 200 all ranks.

Disembarkation was speedily carried out and every one was looking forward to a period of rest in the land of the Pharaohs. The men were eager, too, to investigate the mysteries of Alexandria, a brief glimpse of which had been caught by some of them upon the route march through the city when they had first arrived in the East. They were not however destined to be quartered actually in Alexandria.

From the docks the Battalion proceeded straight to the rest camp at Sidi Bishr, which is some miles beyond the confines of the city.

The normal routine of camp life, including bathing and

Digitized by Google

inspection parades, followed with regular monotony until the end of the year, when a move was made to Damanhur, the ancient city of Horus, where there are cotton picking works. But Christmas was kept up, despite the rain which caused the cancellation of Church Parade. The 19th January found the Battalion back at Sidi Bishr, but on 1st February it was transferred to Mena Camp, where it remained for a couple of months.

A week later the Battalion was inspected by General Sir J. Maxwell and complimented upon its excellent appearance, despite the hardships which had been suffered on the Gallipoli Peninsula. On 12th January 1916 Captain C. H. Miskin arrived from England with a draft of 400 other ranks. This draft was made up mainly of men of the two Regular Battalions who had seen service in France; and most of them, moreover, had been wounded.

The camp at Mena was occupied by the whole of the 54th Division. It was situated literally under the shadow of the three Pyramids. Ten miles away lay Cairo, reached by a dead straight road, which will long be remembered by the Bedfords as the almost inevitable line taken, week after week, for Brigade route marches.

Here the Battalion underwent general training, interspersed with such a mighty amount of practice in trench warfare, on the newest lines adopted in France, that every one anticipated that the 54th would be one of the Divisions to be sent to the Western theatre of war. On the other hand the whole of the training undertaken, with the exception of the weekly route marches along the Mena–Cairo Road, was done in the desert. This in itself might have suggested a further period of service in the East, had any one at that time dreamed that General Allenby was, later on, to make his successful march to Jerusalem.

The movements of the troops were almost entirely unrestricted, as all ground under cultivation ceased about a mile from the camp on the Cairo side.

The two months spent at Mena gave the Bedfords just

Digitized by Google

the time that was needed for a war-spent battalion to recuperate after heroic fighting and incredible hardships. There was ample time for every one to visit the various places of interest in and around Cairo. Of course, their first attention was claimed by the three Pyramids and the Sphinx. Practically the whole Battalion climbed to the top of the largest Pyramid at one time or another; but two officers alone succeeded in conquering the second largest of these great monuments. They were Lieut.-Colonel Brighten and Captain Miskin. The Pyramid second in size has the last 50 feet of its summit covered with alabaster. So slippery is the surface that the final ascent must be made with bare feet, so that the toes can take every advantage of small holes chipped out of the glistening surface. It is a risky business anyway, for a single slip means certain death. During the time the Bedfords were at Mena there were, in fact, several fatal accidents in the Army through men attempting to climb this Pyramid, the summit of which but few people have reached.

Other places of interest visited were the spot where the Holy Family is said to have been hidden on its flight into Egypt—this is now a tiny Copt Church—and the Citadel (*El Kalaa*, in Arabic), which was built in 1166 with stones taken from the pyramids at Ghizeh. One of the entrances, named Bab el Azab, which is not open to the public, was of particular interest, since it was there that the Mamelukes were all massacred in 1811 by order of the Sultan Mehemet Ali. There was, also, the Mehemet Ali Mosque. This mosque was commenced in 1824 to enclose the tomb of Tewfik Pasha. His nephew, Prince Mehemet Ali, took fifty-three years to build it, using only alabaster in its construction. It is notable as the grandest mosque in Cairo, has in the centre court a sculptured marble fountain for ablutions, and the floor is covered with a magnificent carpet.

Apart from the fearful prices charged, however, it was the bazaars that proved most attractive to all ranks. The Oriental Bazaar covers an entire quarter, including streets, alleys and an almost impassable covered way.

Digitized by Google

Each portion of the bazaar is devoted to some special trade. The shops are about seven feet in size, packed close together and all open to the street. At the front of each shop is a sort of raised floor, covered with an oriental carpet upon which the proprietor squats in native fashion.

In the life of the Oriental the bazaar plays an important part. It is there that many intrigues of various kinds originate and there is always an air of mystery about the women who move silent-footed among the shops, their faces, and as much as possible of their bodies, hidden from the public gaze by long black veils, called *bourko*.

Perhaps, however, it was the streets and the various quarters that proved most interesting by reason of the great animation everywhere visible. In these streets one could see Greeks, Jews, Arabs, Syrians, Levantines, negroes, and, in fact, men and women of all species, and listen, without of course understanding, to their discordant forms of speech. Most of the streets were straight, some of them very dirty, and all were encumbered by many perambulating merchants, such as the fruit sellers, vegetable hawkers, lemonade vendors, water carriers and the undoubtedly salacious dragomans. In and out of this moving throng, mixed with British khaki and half a dozen other uniforms, moved the slow and stately camels and the little donkeys ridden by fellaheen.

Owing to the casualties suffered on Gallipoli the Battalion was extremely weak at this time, numbering less than 500 all ranks. But between the 12th and 22nd February 1916 drafts of two officers and 501 other ranks arrived, bringing the Battalion up to nearly full strength again. Some of the men were not too fit, as they had been wounded in France with the 1st and 2nd Battalions, but the majority were experienced soldiers and soon regained their vigour in the Egyptian winter climate.

From April 1916 to January 1917 the Battalion was in the Suez Canal defences. During most of this time it was marked for mobile column work and had to be prepared to move out at short notice. By reason of this circumstance

Digitized by Google

the Bedfords escaped a good deal of duty in the desert posts, where conditions were very hard and the life one of intolerable monotony. Nearly every month some part of the Battalion went out into the Sinai Desert on one column or another. Even this service, hard though it was, was a welcome change to the men who had endured stationary warfare upon the Gallipoli Peninsula.

Most of the desert marches were without incident, except the Bir el Tawal Expedition in September 1916.

The actual move from Mena was made at the beginning of April. On the 4th of that month orders were issued for the Battalion to prepare to entrain at Cairo for Shallufa, a place at the southern end of the Little Bitter Lake and about fifteen miles north of Suez.

That day tents were struck and baggage dumped ready for the move. After dinner next day the Battalion paraded and marched 11½ miles to Abu el Ela Station at Cairo where they arrived at 5.30 p.m.

At dawn on the 6th they reached Shallufa and their baggage was transported across the Suez Canal. After a few days' digging the column work commenced.

Previous to the Turkish attack on the Suez Canal in February 1915 and until a short while before the Battalion arrived at Shallufa, the British line of defence had rested upon the western bank of the Canal. But early in 1916 a new line, as already described, was taken up east of the water and defended by a series of posts. The distance between these posts varied according to the nature of the ground, but in the area about to be occupied by the Bedfords they were anything from one to five miles apart.

Now that the Turk was freed from anxiety for the safety of Constantinople he was again contemplating an attack on the Canal. Elaborate preparations were made, therefore, for the defence of the posts. Networks of trenches had to be dug and surrounded by barbed-wire entanglements. Entrenching was anything but an easy matter in the shifting sands and entailed a great deal of care and hard work.

Digitized by Google

In the first place the width of the trench, during the digging operations, had to be sufficient to allow for the construction of gently sloping sides to ensure that the sand did not continually run down and refill the excavations as they were made.

When the required depth was reached stakes were driven in along the whole line of the trench, with wire stays on the outside to keep them upright. After the sand outside had been levelled up canvas was stretched from post to post in the form of revetments to hold back the sand.

The fire-step was constructed of short stakes and boards running horizontally and filled up with sand. Every shifting wind that blew set the men cursing against the sand-drift, which had constantly to be cleared out of the trench.

All supplies of material, food and water were brought up by camel, except where a post formed railhead, when supplies arrived by light railway from the Canal, some distance to the west.

The strength of the garrisons of these posts varied from half a company to half a battalion. All ranks slept in tents and messed in huts constructed of upright posts with canvas nailed on for walls and roof. These may have been sun-resisting, but they were certainly neither wind nor sand proof, as those can testify who gritted their teeth upon the unpalatable butter.

In the rear of the posts and close to the east bank of the Suez Canal, where intermittent flooding has made the sand very firm, a further line of defence was created, by building walls of sand-bags, protected in front by ditches filled with barbed-wire entanglements and backed with fire-steps. These defences were sited to be invisible to an approaching enemy.

On 10th April, while the rest of the Battalion was digging lunettes, Captain James went out in command of Nos. 1 and 2 Columns comprising a force of 4 officers and 100 other ranks, acting in co-operation with three squadrons of

Digitized by Google

Yeomanry detailed to make a reconnaissance towards Bir el Giddi and Bir el Tawal.

This force was out for the best part of a week and besides reconnoitring its two main objectives explored many *wadis*. These dried water-courses run through the hills, and it was thought likely that the Turks would use them in advancing to attack the Canal.

On the 14th the Battalion marched ten miles south to Kubri, another spot on the Canal, where similar defence work was to be carried on. The next day Lieut.-Colonel E. W. Brighten was given command of a mixed force of 300 1/5th Bedfords, 25 Bikanir Camel Corps, 75 Middlesex Yeomanry, among whom was Lieut. Huntley Wright, the actor, with R.A.M.C. and R.E. personnel, and the necessary camel transport attached. Captain C. H. Miskin was in command of the one-and-a-half Companies of the Bedfords.

After passing through the post defences the column concentrated on the 22nd at the Wadi el Haj and here a post of one officer and 24 other ranks was found by the 5th Bedfords to protect and control relays of camel convoys. They instituted also a signal station to maintain communication with another post situated on the Darb el Haj. This Arabic name means literally "Pilgrims' Road," and was given to the route followed before the war by those pilgrims to Mecca from Egypt who were too poor to afford the sea journey. The whole of its length is marked by cairns of stones.

Apart from the obvious duty of getting in touch with the enemy, the column was detailed to prospect for water, which might be needed for a future advance. In the course of such prospecting a detachment came across a very ancient stone building, which had fallen to ruins in the desolate isolation of hundreds of miles of desert. It looked like a chapel and there was considerable speculation as to the purposes for which it had been used.

Meantime, the main body of the column pushed on up the *wadi*, the floor of which was mostly hard. The perpendicular sides varied from five to fifteen feet in height.

Digitized by Google

On either side the flank guards trudged slowly forward through endless sand dunes. There was neither shade nor wind, the thermometer registered well over 120 degrees in the shade, and both cavalry and infantry progressed but slowly and suffered a good deal.

The water was all carried in metal containers by camels, and when the rations were issued at meal times during the day, it was found necessary to wrap a handkerchief round metal knife handle or enamel cup to protect the hands, so great was the heat.

By midday on the 24th the column had passed clean through the hills, without encountering any opposition, and, turning right-handed, marched south until it reached ground which bore signs of having been under cultivation at an earlier period. Here touch was established with another column which had followed the Wadi el Mitla through the hills.

Patrols were sent out in all directions, but reported no signs of the enemy and camp was made for the night. No water had been located either and at 4 o'clock next morning the return march began. Kubri was reached at the end of a six days' desert trek, in the course of which some seventy odd miles had been covered; reasonably good marching, having regard to the prevailing conditions.

It was about this time that the Prince of Wales, with the Commander of the 9th Corps, passed through the camp of the 54th Division on his way to inspect the desert posts. It was at the end of April, too, that Lieut.-Colonel Brighten was thrown from his horse and sustained a slight concussion. During his absence in hospital the Battalion was commanded by Major C. H. Wolff, who had recently reported for duty from the 4th Battalion The Bedfordshire Regiment.

The Battalion now settled down to daily work on the strengthening of the defences of the bridge-head. For recreations there were bathing in the canal and fishing from the pontoon bridge, combined with some fish spearing

Digitized by Google

which was rendered more exciting at night when lanterns were used to attract the fish to the surface. Constantly seen mirages also provided a novelty, for people riding back to camp and seeing their tents apparently pitched in the middle of a lake were apt to ask themselves, at first, if it would not, after all, be better to " take a little more water with it."

Even worse was the experience of the sentries on duty near the 25 feet high canal bank who apparently saw the upper works of ships sailing by on sand upside down and with only the tops of their inverted funnels touching the ground !

On the western side of the main canal, not more than 200 yards away and parallel to it, is the Sweet Water Canal. This is fed from the Nile and, since it irrigates a strip of land, the Arabs who live there find it possible to grow lemons, dates and tangerines. From the sale of this produce they make a meagre living ; but the wise man did not buy anything else from them since they were an utterly filthy lot, with their goats, chickens and ducks all living with them in one room and even the children so inured to dirt, disease and hardship that although their eyes, noses and mouths might be literally covered with flies they did not even trouble to brush them away.

The 18th May saw a considerable change in the dispositions of the Battalion. On that date they took over the posts, Crewe, Kubri Railhead, Baluchistan, and Gurkha on the banks of the Suez Canal. The Head-quarters and the remainder of the Battalion, not required for garrisoning the posts, remained at Kubri.

On the 25th of the month Lieut.-Colonel E. W. Brighten returned from hospital and resumed command of the Battalion.

The living quarters and defensive walls of two of the posts, namely Baluchistan and Gurkha, were made of mud, sand and salt water, mixed into a stiff mass which dried hard in the sun. The troops found these novel quarters wonderfully cool, but owing to the small window

Digitized by Google

space allowed they were also very dark. As may be gathered from their names, the posts had first been made and occupied by Indian troops. They were built at the time of the first Turkish attack upon the Canal.

One thing which the Battalion was not slow to discover during its stay in this sector, was that the waters of the Little Bitter Lake held small but most delectable oysters, which could be collected easily by wading knee deep. All ranks, too, did a good deal of what is known in East Anglia as " dab-pricking," by spearing a flat fish, in appearance rather like a Dover sole.

Thus passed the time until 26th August, when the Battalion concentrated at El Shatt for general training.

Meanwhile Captain F. W. H. Nicholas, perhaps the most famous all-round athlete the Army has ever produced, and an Oxford Blue to boot, had handed over to Lieut. N. Taitt, who assumed the duties of Acting Adjutant, the Adjutant himself having gone on detachment as Column Staff Officer.

About this time the Turks made three air raids on Suez and dropped bombs. The damage done was very small and the casualties few.

The Battalion marched out of Salford at 6.30 a.m. on the 26th, leaving behind a rear party under 2nd-Lieut. Rawlins to hand over to the 1/6th Essex Regt. The Commanding Officer, Signal Officer and Medical Officer rode right through to El Shatt, the Adjutant and Quartermaster proceeding by train to Shallufa and thence by train again to Port Tewfik, arriving at El Shatt at 3.30 in the afternoon. The Battalion arrived in four lighters between 5 and 9 p.m. and by 9.30 the concentration was complete. Three days later Major-General S. W. Hare (commanding the 54th (East Anglian) Division) and his Staff inspected the Battalion.

The 1st September was notable for the fact, first, that Lieut. L. P. New arrived with the details from Kubri, while, according to the War Diary, " Private Ashpole escaped from hospital and swam across the Canal;

Digitized by Google

evidently quite insane." It would appear that this soldier, who escaped at 5 o'clock on the afternoon of the 1st, was not recaptured and returned to hospital until 5 o'clock next morning.

On 13th September 1916 the Battalion, less two companies, moved out *viâ* the Old Pilgrim Road across the desert with the object of seizing a Turkish outpost situated in the mountains about forty miles distant. Brig.-General Mudge, who commanded the 162nd Infantry Brigade of the 54th Division, was in charge of this Column, which comprised a composite battalion made up of B and D Companies 1/5th Bedfords, one company 1/4th Bn. The Northamptonshire Regt., and one company 1/10th Bn. The London Regt., with detachments of Yeomanry and Camel Corps attached.

The line of march lay through sand hills, which in some places rose as high as 300 feet above the normal level of the desert. These hills, however, did not provide reliable landmarks, since they were being continually shifted by the wind. Progress was slow and very laborious, so that not more than ten miles a day could be attempted. As surprise was to be the very essence of this attack, the Column marched by night and lay hidden by day.

The last part of the march led through the foothills of the mountains. Here, the sand was left behind and the men found themselves marching in easier going over rock and sun-baked earth.

At the end of four days' marching the Column arrived within sight of its objective and a reconnaissance was made. Thereafter the Column Commander issued orders for a night march to be followed by an attack at dawn. His plan was for B Company 1/5th Bedfords, under Captain Maier, to make a frontal demonstration. The rest of the infantry, comprising D Company 1/5th Bedfords, under Captain J. T. Yarde, one company 1/4th Northants, and one company 1/10th Londons, were detailed to work round the flank and so to climb the mountain that they would be in position to attack the Turks at dawn.

Digitized by Google

Meanwhile the Cavalry and Camelry were, under cover of the darkness, to get into position in rear of the enemy's post, so that they might cut off any parties of the enemy who tried to escape.

The night march was very difficult, and would have been quite impossible but for the dim light of a waning moon. It was necessary for the Battalion Commander to allow five hours for the completion of a four miles march. At one time, whilst negotiating a mountain track in the darkness, two mules, carrying stretchers and Lewis gun equipment, fell over the mountain side. They went down some hundreds of feet, but, miraculous though it may seem, sustained no damage and the Column waited until they were hauled up again.

The first light of dawn was showing in the eastern sky by the time the composite battalion had arrived at the foot of the spur which it was thought would lead to the enemy's position.

D Company, under Captain Yarde at once tackled the ascent.

They went up at tremendous speed, and, under cover of their Lewis guns, rushed the position with the bayonet. The Turkish garrison, however, considered discretion the better part of valour and all managed to slip down the rear of the mountain in front of our advancing infantry. There they had camels waiting, probably beasts of the Bisharin racing breed, and with their aid and their own knowledge of the country the defeated Turks and Bedouins were able to avoid the British Cavalry and Camelry who were waiting for them.

All the stores of the garrison were captured, however; among other things found in the post being some £10 worth of Turkish banknotes. The wells, which the garrison had been guarding, were blown up and rendered useless, to prevent the enemy from making any further use of the Old Pilgrim Road. The Column, therefore, was signally successful in achieving its object.

In this action the British Column suffered only two

Digitized by Google

casualties. It would appear that B Company, under Captain Maier, must have stumbled in the darkness right on to a small enemy picket. Two or three Turks sprang up right in the middle of the astonished company, loosed off their rifles, and Private Fox, who was leading the Company Commander's charger, was killed. Private Meeks, D Company, was wounded during the assault upon the main position.

Upon the same day that the Bedfords took part in this little desert action a reconnaissance in force to Bir el Mazar was carried out and this decided the enemy to withdraw from the all-important El Arish position. From then onwards to the end of November the main situation remained quiet.

At El Shatt and Suez, however, Prisoner of War Camps had been prepared and were being quickly filled with prisoners captured by the Army of the King of the Hedjaz, and the Battalion was constantly doing escort duty from the camps to Cairo, where the prisoners were concentrated. Fully 90 per cent of these unfortunate captives were found to be suffering from acute dysentery.

This escort duty was not particularly congenial; but, on the other hand, it was not entirely free from incident. The trains were always stopping, for reasons known only to their drivers, and at each stop the opportunity was given to as many as possible of the prisoners to get out on to the side of the railway. The engine-drivers had a way of starting just as suddenly as they had stopped, and without, moreover, giving any one the slightest warning. It was, of course, necessary to get the prisoners back on board, often before they could be conveniently expected to return. Many of them did not feel inclined, or deemed it impossible, to conform to the orders of the men composing the guard. This order was usually couched in the terms, " Hi, Johnny, get back into that ruddy train," accompanied by much graphic gesticulation. Not infrequently it was found necessary to " coax " the prisoners with the point of a bayonet, which did seem to bring home to them the

Digitized by Google

urgency of the matter and a general rush for the carriages followed.

On 29th September 5 officers and 210 other ranks, under Major Dayrell, Captain Yarde and Lieut. F. B. Hobbs, were ordered to Port Tewfik on a secret and special duty, and it was not until some time after they had sailed that it became known that they had gone to join a mixed force, including R.A.F. personnel, which was to land at Jedda and give assistance to the Army of the King of the Hedjaz.

This detachment departed very much cock-a-hoop at what they considered their good luck, but disappointment awaited them. By the time they arrived at Jedda, King Hussein had changed his mind and would not let a single one of them land. They returned, therefore, to their comrades, none the worse for a very nice little trip up and down the Red Sea.

The month of October passed quietly with normal routine work, combined with a fair amount of prisoner of war escort duties.

During the time that the Battalion was in this area instruments were issued to the 5th Bedfords to form a Divisional Band, and Lieut. Wood, late Bandmaster of the Rifle Brigade, was appointed Bandmaster. He, however, was relieved by W. Goodger, of the Battalion, when that instrumentalist was released from hospital in September 1916.

Goodger was really keen, the men under him put their backs into the job and a really fine military band was ultimately evolved. They formed also an orchestra which was a great asset to the force out East, and made their concerts really " posh " affairs.

The Bandmaster tells a good story of the time that the Battalion was at El Shatt. According to Sergt. Goodger, a fellow member of the Sergeants' Mess developed a sudden " craving " for chickens. After long deliberation he sent to Suez for what he fondly hoped would be a pair of Surrey fowls. This caused a good deal of mild amusement, which was as nothing to the shouts of

Digitized by Google

laughter which arose when the poultry arrived, not quite fit for killing, since they proved to be a couple of chicks that had not long since been hatched.

Every cloud, however, has its silver lining. One of these chicks became the pet of the Sergeants' Mess and later travelled many hundreds of miles with the Band, pecking at any one it disliked with real ferocity but following its friends about with dog-like devotion.

The Battalion also adopted as a mascot an Indian ram, which was known as Wazza. But the last heard of this poor beast was at the Third Battle of Gaza.

That the fame of the Bedfords' Band was not confined even to their own Division is evidenced by the following notice which was issued by A Battery, H.A.C. :

"*SPECIAL and Important Announcement to the Nobility, Gentry and Inhabitants Generally of Ayun Musa, Abu Tif and Mabieuk :—*

'A' Battery, Honourable Artillery Company, beg to announce that they have secured, regardless of expense, the famous and world-renowned Band of the 54th Division, conducted by the original and noted Bandmaster Mr. W. Goodger.

These gifted Instrumentalists, whose renown has reached far beyond the borders of Sinai, will positively perform on Saturday evening next 3rd September, at the Camp Fire Concert of the Honourable Artillery Company

It is scarcely necessary to remind our Patrons that this will be the first time that the cymbals have clashed and the clarion notes of the trumpets reverberated through our ancient oasis since the days of the Children of Israel.

The Feast of Music will be enriched by several of the celebrated vocalists of the Battery.

This Festival Harmonieux will commence at 8 p.m. at the Moses Well."

Digitized by Google

On 13th November the Battalion left El Shatt and again took over desert posts. During the whole period that the Battalion had held such posts they had never ceased to improve the defences, but now were able to give more time to bomb-throwing, musketry, bayonet-fighting and kindred matters.

It was some time since the Officers' Mess had seen fresh meat, fowl or game of any kind, and a certain kindly soul going on leave to Cairo thought he would bring back, as a pleasant surprise for his brother officers, sufficient quail to feed the whole Mess.

He put up at Shepherd's, of course. The morning of the day he was due to return to the Regiment he told the Egyptian hall-porter to instruct the *gharry* driver to take him to a shop where quail could be bought. The hall-porter had but little English and the officer's Arabic was limited to a few juicy swear words that he had found most useful upon occasion, both of which circumstances may account for the *gharry* drawing up outside a fruit shop. The officer got down and strove to make his wishes plain by repeating the word quail on an ever-rising crescendo many times over. Finally he alarmed the driver considerably by flapping his arms up and down in a vain attempt to imitate a quail in flight. The driver, once convinced that no serious assault upon him was intended, ushered his fare back into the *gharry* and drove him to an open-fronted shop, the walls of which were lined with cages. There were parrots of every shade, shape, breed and hue. But was there a quail? Not likely!

The officer, however, persevered, and not only the proprietor, but also his three assistants, each armed with a parrot in a cage, seemed something more than willing to help him. No angry shakes of the head disheartened the obliging foreigners. Parrot after parrot was brought out until finally the officer, outsworn by a bird evidently of extensive nautical experience, turned to leave, and at the same moment one bird got loose and flew to the top of a

Digitized by Google

tree across the road, whither it was followed by the whole staff, cursing their ill-fortune.

In the subsequent confusion the officer made good his escape, fully convinced that the strain of trying to buy quail was altogether too much for his war-weakened constitution—and so the Mess still ate bully beef.

The time was now approaching Christmas 1916.

On 12th December another mixed column reconnoitred the hills, its particular duty being to empty two huge water tanks which were carved out of the solid rock and attributed to the Romans. During the rainy season these tanks were filled by water running down from the hills.

At the time the column sought its objective the rainy season had been over for fully six months, and yet the water in the tanks was found excellent for drinking, which seems to prove that it would remain pure for some time.

On 14th December the tanks were located and pumped dry, the Turks being thus denied any further use of that particular water supply.

Speaking in general, training continued much as usual up to Christmas, but those who had seen the Battalion as it came off Gallipoli would never have recognised the fine, fit, fighting lads who, all unknown to themselves, were getting ready by degrees to bear their part in the last Great Crusade into the Holy Land.

The men were fit and cheerful. For months past all ranks had imagined that Paradise must be a place where plenty of cool rain fell, and numbers had made up their minds, directly the rains broke, to stretch themselves on the sand while the cooling waters should lash down upon their naked bodies. At the very first shower, which fell on Christmas Day, however, the air was blue with bad language voiced from a thousand throats, the owners of which had added many strange oaths to their vocabularies since leaving the family circle.

Christmas Day passed much as it would in England, allowing for the difference in climate and some slight stringency of active service conditions.

Digitized by Google

All ranks had a good mid-day meal with plenty to eat and drink, and Lieut. New, having been elected " Mayor of Oldham Post," made a tour of inspection, with his own corporation feeling very comfortable in front and the pseudo-Mayoral Corporation trailing behind. The temporary " Mayor " finished up with a speech from the roof of the Officers' Mess Hut, which nobody, least of all the orator himself, understood.

It may be remembered that in an earlier part of this book mention was made of a Christmas cheque for £20 which was sent to the 5th Bedfords from the County Comforts and Sports Fund, and a promise was made to relate how that money was expended. It proved, in reality, to be the foundation of the very pleasant Christmas spent by the Battalion in 1916, despite the fact that, at the last moment, two Companies had been moved, so that the unit was split up in five different places on Christmas Day. They were, however, given the same everywhere, and sports were arranged at each place.

The £20 from the Comforts Fund served to purchase 150 turkeys, 2,000 eggs, 1,000 cakes, 1,000 oranges, and 902 pints of beer and minerals. These things, with ½lb. per man of Christmas pudding from the *Daily Telegraph* and *Daily News* fund, gave them a very good dinner and also something extra for breakfast and tea.

The programme of the sports at Headquarters is typical of the meetings at all five places. Half the events, including the heats in the flat races and most of the mounted contests, were carried through on Christmas Day, and the remainder on Boxing Day, on which night Lieut.-Colonel Brighten distributed the prizes in the Y.M.C.A hut.

The regimental band played during the sports and the officials were as follows: Judges, mounted events: Major G. M. de L. Dayrell, 5th Bedfords; 2nd-Lieut. Parker, Dorset Yeomanry. Judges, flat events: Lieut.-Colonel Brighten, Major Dayrell, Captain J. T. Yarde. Starters: 2nd-Lieuts. H. S. Armstrong and R. E. Bass.

Digitized by Google

The results of the sports were as follows :—

RELAY RACE.—*Band of 54th Division.* Lieut.-Colonel E. W. Brighten, C.M.G., Sergt. Gething, Cpl. Bandy, Bandsman Shinn (five shillings each to the three last-named).

BAND RACE.—1st, Bandsman Nicholl (circular bass), clasp knife ; 2nd, Bandsman Heley (big drum), five shillings.

440 YDS. FLAT.—1st, Pte. Gilbert, Beds, silver wrist watch ; 2nd, Sergt. Henson, R.A.M.C., five shillings.

100 YDS. FLAT.—1st, Pte. Underwood, Beds, cigarette case ; 2nd, Pte. Gilbert, Beds, five shillings.

VETERANS' RACE (100 yds.).—1st, Lieut.-Colonel E. W. Brighten ; 2nd, Pte. Arnold, Beds, pipe in case ; 3rd, Pte. Wharf, Beds, five shillings.

OBSTACLE RACE.—1st, Pte. Gilbert, Beds, cigarette case ; 2nd, Pte. Swannell, tobacco pouch.

POTATO RACE.—1st, Pte. Swain, Beds, tobacco pouch ; 2nd, Pte. Frazer, Beds, pocket knife.

MULE RACE.—1st, Pte. Dunstan, Beds, case of pipes ; 2nd, Pte. A. Sharman, Beds, tobacco pouch.

TENT PEGGING.—1st, 2nd-Lieut. Parker, Dorset Yeomanry ; 2nd, Pte. Walkling, Beds, case of pipes ; 3rd, 2nd-Lieut. Armstrong, Beds ; 4th, Pte. Dunstan, Beds, five shillings. The points scored were 6, 4, 3, 2 respectively.

VICTORIA CROSS RACE.—1st, Pte. Marsh, Dorset Yeomanry, nickel wrist watch ; 2nd, Sergt. Rossiter, Dorset Yeomanry, five shillings ; extra prize of five shillings to Pte. Pugh, rider of mule.

WRESTLING ON HORSEBACK.—1st, Pte. Wooding, Beds, safety razor ; 2nd, Cpl. Bastable, Dorset Yeomanry, fountain pen.

From the above results it will be seen that the Bedfords were invincible in the athletic events and even in the mounted contests proved themselves quite capable of holding their own.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER NINE

PALESTINE—1917

Sinai Desert—The Promised Land in Sight—First Battle of Gaza

THE year 1917 was to bring the Yellow Devils right back into the firing line.

On 5th January the detachments were relieved from their several posts and the Battalion concentrated at Kubri for the five mile march to Suez on the 9th. They moved again to Kantara on the 30th, in preparation for the advance across the Sinai Desert.

Kantara, prior to the war, was nothing more than a small cluster of huts, too insignificant to be termed even a village. But when the Battalion arrived at the new Kantara they found a huge standing camp of permanent huts, railway sidings, masses of tents and the population of a fair-sized English town. Kantara, in short, had become the Base for a projected advance across the desert.

By this time the standard gauge railway had been laid to within striking distance of the Turkish position at El Arish, and by the end of 1916 a 12-inch pipe line, ninety miles in length, was also within twenty miles of that place.

The preparation for the advance into Palestine had, therefore, been going on for some time; and by 20th December 1916 all was ready for the final advance. On the 21st our Cavalry surrounded El Arish, only to find that the enemy had withdrawn. Part of his force had retired to Rafa and part to Magdhaba.

From El Arish, Lieut.-General Sir Phillip Chetwode,

Digitized by Google

commanding the Desert Column, which furnished the advance guard of the Eastern Force, decided to attack Magdhaba at once. Later he attacked also the Turkish position at El Magruntein, south-west of Rafa. Both actions were successful and both extraordinarily similar, in that after the British General had decided that his forces were not strong enough to perform the task allotted to them, brilliant cavalry action secured the key to the position, and the orders to withdraw were cancelled.

The occupation of El Arish by Chetwode's forces allowed the Navy to clear up an enemy mine-field, and by 23rd December stores were being landed on the beach. This circumstance permitted of infantry being brought up for the final consolidation of the former Turkish position, and, incidentally, the last of the Turks had now been cleared out of Egypt.

All was now ready for the great advance, but on 11th January 1917 the War Cabinet cabled to General Sir Archibald Murray to defer any large scale operations in Palestine until the autumn.

Meanwhile, General Murray was fully alive to the value of seizing the springs in the Wadi Ghuzze, and the even greater facility which would be afforded to his projected autumn campaign if he could capture Gaza itself, and thus deny the Turks the advantage of the strong Gaza–Beersheba position, which was the gateway to Palestine.

In the first place he would be able to throw his railway across the *wadi*; and, beyond the Gaza–Beersheba line, would win the use of a partly metalled road, suitable for all forms of transport in the dry season, which would be immediately served by the standard gauge railway he had already pushed out across the Sinai Desert.

The "old" Mediterranean Expeditionary Force had now become the "new" Egyptian Expeditionary Force, and Lieut.-General Sir Archibald Murray had decided upon the further advance into Palestine, on the theory that any passive scheme for the defence of the Suez Canal must be wasteful in both men and material. It was his opinion,

Digitized by Google

in fact, that the proper strategical base for the defence of Egypt lay between El Arish and Kossaima.

The line of General Murray's projected advance was based very much upon the strategy employed by Napoleon for the advance of the French troops into Palestine in 1799.

Transport across the soft sands of the Sinai Desert provided a pretty problem, for wheels not fitted with the 2½-inch blocks, held on to the tires by chains, which were known as "Ped-rails," sank too deeply, and, even with these adjuncts, guns could only be moved very slowly by teams of eight or ten horses. Camels, therefore, offered the obvious solution. Fifteen miles for artillery and twenty-five miles for cavalry, moving mostly at a walk, made up a long and exhausting day's march. The infantry and Ford cars fared better, by reason of an ingenious scheme for making wire roads by pegging down rabbit netting, but these roads were of no use for heavier traffic.

General Murray's army, then, was close to the Palestinian frontier and the further advance was to be made along the *Dorab es Sultania*, the Royal Road, as the Arabs call it, along which warriors have marched between Asia and Africa since long before the earliest recorded military history. The Philistines used it, and their ancient cities, Gaza and Gath, lie on it. At Arsuf one of our own kings, Richard the Lion-hearted, fought Saladin, and at Acre, Napoleon suffered the first reverse of his meteoric military career. It is the route between the cradles of the earliest civilisations, the countries bordering the Nile and the Euphrates, and its course follows the dreary desert of Sinai, the rich plains of Philistia and Sharon, and goes by the rocky fastness of Judea before crossing the Carmel Range to the plain of Esdraelon. It then rises past the Sea of Galilee to the highlands east of the Jordan, and so follows its way to Damascus and Aleppo.

Over the five hundred miles of that weary way the 5th Bedfords were to march and fight.

Before General Chetwode's cavalry had captured El

Digitized by Google

Arish the 54th Division had been withdrawn from the Suez Canal defences, and, meantime, while the Eastern Force was being gathered, the 1/5th Bedfords quitted Kantara, with the rest of the 162nd Brigade, still commanded by Brigadier-General Mudge, who had taken over the command on Gallipoli after Brigadier-General de Winton had been wounded. On 1st February 1917 then, the Battalion marched out of Kantara and that night they bivouacked at a point near Kilo 18 on the Kantara–Romani Road. The next day they reached Pelusium Siding on the railway, and on 3rd February marched into Romani, bivouacked in the camp, and there remained for the next five days.

Romani itself, the scene of so many battles of vital moment, both ancient and modern, proved to be but a straggling village; and, certainly, the troops liked better Mohamdiya, whither they went to bathe on the 5th and 6th. Here were only a few huts, whence the inhabitants had long since fled, and the ruins of a Roman fort, the walls of which rose up some fifteen feet from the edge of the shore.

On the 12th the Battalion came to Bir el Abd, the ancient jumping off place of Napoleon's campaign. The Brigade continued its march, unrelieved by incident or event, but a great many dead animals marked the passage of earlier troops, such as horses, oxen and camels, which latter, of all decaying flesh, smells the worst.

At these times flies were very troublesome. The nature of the country changed hardly at all. The Brigade pressed on, sometimes through undulating sand dunes, sometimes across flat plains, broken up with clumps of palm trees. But at one spot, where a bivouac was made, the sand was covered with low growing scrub which proved to be infested with tortoises.

The road the troops followed across the Sinai Desert, as already stated, was formed by laying ordinary rabbit wire on the sand and pegging it down with steel pegs.

This wire road extended practically the whole way

Digitized by Google

across the desert, and was wide enough for a column in fours to march in comfort. It was firm to the tread, and not only saved the troops an enormous amount of fatigue, but doubled the distance it would have been possible to march in a day on the loose sand.

Keen soldiers studied with admiration the solid organisation and careful preparation which, obviously, had preceded the British advance. But even more keenly did they realise the marvel of the feat accomplished by the Turkish troops, who had crossed the Sinai Desert in 1915, with no wire road to lighten their labours, carrying their water supply in pontoons and dragging their guns on sand-sleighs. And yet the Turks had reached the Canal and launched three pontoons loaded with men, all of whom had been killed or captured by our troops on the western bank.

On 23rd February the Brigade marched into El Arish, and took over a vacant standing camp. They had covered 100 miles in just over three weeks, with the temperature round about 120 degrees in the shade for most of the trek. There, as a final precaution against possible evils ahead, the Battalion was inoculated against cholera. They had had, it will be remembered, a fair experience of dysentery on Gallipoli.

The men had evinced an extraordinary degree of interest in Khan Yunus, the first town taken in the Promised Land, with its picturesque collection of houses set in wonderfully fertile gardens, surrounded by stiff hedges of impenetrable cactus, and in the mean bazaar and the ruined palace of Saladin. But their past pleasure was as nothing compared with their present interest in the two most ancient cities of Palestine, Gaza, where Samson was betrayed by Delilah to the Philistines, and Beersheba, in which place Abraham dug the " Well of the Oath."

A good deal of interest was taken, also, in much that was talked of concerning an ancient prophecy, which was well on the road to fulfilment. It was to the effect that when the waters of the Nile should come to Palestine, Jerusalem would be retaken from the Turks by a Prophet of the Lord.

Digitized by Google

The pipe lines stretched far already towards the Holy City and, presently, General Allenby was to take over the supreme command. Transliterated into Arabic, Lord Allenby's name stands as "Allah en Nebi," meaning, literally, "The Prophet of God."

The Battalion now found itself in wonderfully pleasant surroundings and experienced great relief after the hardships and the monotony of the Sinai Desert.

East of El Arish, cultivated lands succeed the desert; along the coast, hard by Rafa, stretches a belt of sand dunes, two or three miles in width. Inland of these dunes there is a belt of light soil for ten or twelve miles carrying barley. The ground, although practicable for cavalry and infantry, was found impracticable for heavy transport, and there were no roads. The Wadi Ghuzze, already referred to, flows into the sea six miles south of Gaza, and, fed by its inland tributaries which drain the Judean Hills, forms a natural, physical frontier for Palestine to the south, although, actually, it has never marked the frontier line in practice.

This *wadi* formed a considerable natural obstacle, for it is fully a hundred yards wide in places, and has rugged banks which are sometimes over forty feet in height. East of the *wadi*, and running south-westerly from Gaza towards Beersheba stretches an irregular chain of hills.

The whole configuration of the country, therefore, offers a natural barrier to a military advance into Palestine from the Sinai Desert, while Gaza and Beersheba, separated from one another by a distance of some twenty-five miles, are the main entrances to Southern Palestine, the reason being that Gaza commands the coast road and Beersheba is the last water base at the edge of the mountainous wilderness to east and south.

Gaza, which stands upon a low hill about two miles from the sea, has been besieged and sacked time and again. Samson carried away its gates and such masters in war as Alexander the Great, Pompey and Napoleon have all inscribed their names upon the pages of its history.

Digitized by Google

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
K L

Digitized by Google

1

2

3

4

PL. XIII.] PALESTINE, 1917. [*L* 147

SECOND BATTLE OF GAZA.

1. The C.O's "Home." 2. Sniping at 1,500 yards from Mansurah Ridge. 3. The Q.M.'s Office. 4. H.Q. in the Front Line.

Digitized by Google

Beersheba, on the other hand, has an almost purely pastoral history.

In these circumstances General Murray was, not unnaturally, anxious to secure one, and if possible two, of the principal stepping-stones to his proposed autumn offensive.

The British troops were in fine fettle. Twelve months of incessant toil in the Sinai Desert lay behind them. They had endured hard fighting, toilsome digging, the making of military works, building of railways and the construction of pipe lines and roads; but, worst of all, they had suffered the endless monotony of marching through an inhospitable waste. Now the Promised Land lay just ahead.

Behind them stretched a hundred miles and more of monotonous sand, but before them, as the troops came up to Rafa and burst into enthusiastic cheering, was outspread a very different vista. As far as the eye could reach stretched billowy downs, in which big patches of barley shone bright as glowing emeralds, and immense tracts of pasture, but, over and above everything, the scenery around them was green and fresh.

It was all very like England, and if the buttercups, for which perhaps they longed, were missing, there was in their place an abundance of more gorgeous flowers to light the vivid greenness of the plain. There were scarlet anemones, as bright as rubies, crocuses, narcissi, the short-stemmed iris of brilliant hue, tiny sweet peas, clover, a thousand common flowers in almost wanton profusion, and a black arum lily of strange beauty.

To beast and man, who had become desert veterans, this was indeed the Promised Land, and no more pastoral picture can be imagined than that of some soldier stretched at his ease upon the sward, while his horses cropped the luscious grass.

There was more in it, too, to affect the condition of the troops than mere geographical beauty.

The land they were about to enter is hallowed by the greatest events of history. It is the birthplace of Christ,

Digitized by Google

and the very cradle of that civilisation the soldiers had left England to save.

As a first preliminary to the fighting that was to follow, reconnaissances were made over the ground the Turks had evacuated.

The troops sent out to reconnoitre caught sight with wonder of the high minaret of Gaza, which stands up above the dark framework of trees encircling the town. Some of them, no doubt, knew that that mosque had been built as a Christian Church by the Knights Templar of the twelfth century, who defended Gaza so stoutly until Saladin drove them out.

Other reconnaissances passed over the abandoned Turkish stronghold of Wadi Sheikh Narun, towards Beersheba crouching in the plain beneath the southern slopes of the Judean Hills.

By March the G.O.C. in C. was in a position to make a bid for both objectives, *i.e.*, the Wadi Ghuzze and Gaza itself.

Before him Kress von Kressenstein, the German General commanding the Turkish forces, had prepared a strong defensive position at Wadi Sheikh Narun, not far from, and to the west of, Shellal on the Wadi Ghuzze. Gaza was occupied by a small Turkish garrison commanded by Major Tiller, also a German officer ; Von Kressenstein's entrenchments, moreover, gave the city some measure of protection, but were primarily sited to cover the Turkish railway to Beersheba.

At the last, however, Von Kressenstein shirked the issue, and, sacrificing his carefully prepared position at Shellal, withdrew his troops to the Gaza–Beersheba line, which he rightly regarded as being of paramount importance. Finally, after garrisoning Gaza and Beersheba, with the main body of his troops located at Tel esh Sheria and Jemmameh, Von Kressenstein decided to concentrate his forces upon the defence of Gaza itself, until the British should have committed themselves to a definite line of advance.

Digitized by Google

Up to this time the Turks had shown a marked disinclination to give battle, and General Dobell, commanding Eastern Force, which contained the 54th Division, was equally determined to force the enemy to make a stand. His proposal for an attack on Gaza at the end of March was finally accepted by General Murray.

The main difficulty lay in the fact that surprise was essential, and the employment of practically the whole of the Eastern Force unavoidable. This, of course, increased the difficulties of supply, since we should be forced to launch our attack while railhead was still a good distance short of Gaza.

General Murray's ingenuity was, however, anything but at an end. Every animal and every vehicle available was requisitioned, and fifteen "trains" were improvised. These trains, however, could carry only sufficient food, water and ammunition for a twenty-four hours' battle, wherefore success before dark on the day of the attack would be, obviously, the determining factor of success or failure.

On 25th March the force was assembled for the attack on Gaza. The disposition of the troops was as follows:— Desert Column at Deir el Belah; 54th Division, including 1/5th Bedfords, about Inseirat; the 52nd Division at Khan Yunus, and the Camel Corps just south-east of the 52nd Division at Abasan el Kebir.

If possible the strategy which had won for us Magdhaba and Rafa was to be repeated upon a larger scale. A screen of cavalry and camelry was to be formed north-east and south-east of Gaza to contain the Turkish garrison and hold off his reinforcements, while the 53rd Division, strengthened by one brigade of the 54th Division, was to deliver the actual assault upon the city. This part of the action was committed to the charge of Sir Phillip Chetwode, while General Dobell kept in hand the 54th Division (less one brigade), to support the south-eastern cavalry screen, and the 52nd Division as a general reserve and for the protection of the lines of communication.

Digitized by Google

As our actual assaulting troops we had four infantry brigades, three artillery brigades, some medium artillery—approximately 12,000 rifles, thirty-six field guns and half a dozen 60-pounders.

Finally, we held in reserve another division, say 8,000 rifles, and forty-four field guns.

This gave us a numerical advantage, which appeared, on paper, to be sufficient for our purpose; but there was the time factor to reckon with; our mounted troops to north and east were widely disseminated and there was the natural strength of the Gaza position itself to be overcome.

As has been said, Gaza stands on and around a hill, a couple of miles inland from the coast, and is surrounded to a depth of from a mile to a mile and a half by gardens and fields separated from each other by the natural defences of thick cactus hedges, which can be nearly as great a deterrent to thinly-clad infantry as barbed wire itself. Some of these hedges are as much as fifteen feet thick and ten feet high. Beyond the cactus-protected fields and gardens a belt of intricate sand dunes stretches down to the sea. On the east, a narrow, irregular ridge rises up about a mile from the town, running from north-east to south-west.

This, the Ali Muntar Ridge, whence tradition has it that Samson carried away the gates of Gaza, was the real key to the defences of the town.

On this ridge the Turks had prepared a strong position and they had also sited trenches at the edge of the cactus area south and south-west of Gaza.

To summarise the plan of attack. The mounted troops were ordered to cross the Wadi Ghuzze before 5 a.m. on the morning of the 26th March, and they were to be followed across the *wadi* by the 53rd Division. Of this division a detachment of one battalion and two squadrons was to make a demonstration against the Turks among the sand dunes between Gaza and the sea. Finally, the 54th Division was ordered to move into a position facing east on the Sheik Abbas Ridge, and was to hold one

Digitized by Google

infantry and one artillery brigade in readiness near the Wadi Ghuzze to support the 53rd Division if necessary.

The Commander-in-Chief, Sir Archibald Murray, had his command post at El Arish; the Headquarters of Eastern Force and Desert Column were both at Inseirat, and those of the 53rd Division at El Breij.

On the 24th March the 5th Bedfords, together with the rest of the 162nd Infantry Brigade of the 54th Division, arrived at Rafa under cover of the darkness, and there furnished the Divisional Outposts. On the next night they moved into the Inseirat Hills, where a few hours' sleep was obtained.

At 2.30 a.m. on the night of 25th–26th March all the troops left their bivouacs and by daylight on the 26th the crossing of the Wadi Ghuzze, the small stream which runs roughly parallel to the Egyptian–Palestine frontier five miles south of Gaza, had commenced. Meanwhile the 162nd Brigade had moved again to a point near Sharta and during the day was in reserve at that place.

By ill-fortune for the British, dawn broke on the day planned for the attack with a dense fog rolling up from the sea.

By 7 a.m. the fog, which had helped the cavalry by providing a not unwelcome concealment for their movements, lifted; but, meanwhile, it had imposed upon the 53rd Infantry Division a really serious delay. The Commander seems to have been unwilling to move at the risk of losing direction; and so two invaluable hours were lost while he waited for the fog to clear.

It was eight o'clock in the morning before the brigades of the Division reached their first point of assembly, some 6,000 yards short of the Ali Muntar position, which was their objective. But their attack was not launched until nearly midday. Then two brigades of the 53rd Division advanced with great gallantry under a galling fire to within a few hundred yards of the Ali Muntar Hill, but found themselves held up by the cactus hedges already mentioned.

Digitized by Google

From the position where they waited in reserve the 5th Bedfords had a good view of the whole battlefield, and, throughout the action, were able to watch the varying fortunes of the troops engaged. About four o'clock the mounted troops of the Desert Column attacked Gaza from the north, and, despite the thick, thorny cactus hedges encountered one after another in the enclosed ground, forced their way into the northern suburbs of the town. Simultaneously with the Anzac push, General Dallas threw in the 161st Brigade of the 54th Division, which had reached him an hour earlier. This Brigade carried Green Hill, from which a terrible enfilade fire had held up the main assault, and by six o'clock the whole Turkish position along the all-important Ali Muntar Ridge had been won. To make the victory more complete the 2nd Australian Light Horse Brigade and a New Zealand Mounted Brigade had reached the northern outskirts of Gaza and established touch with the infantry on the Ridge. But, just as victory had been in sight on Gallipoli, when the Gurkhas and the South Lancashires looked down upon the Narrows and only the delay of Baldwin's Column robbed us of success by a matter of minutes, so, at Gaza, conquest came an hour too late.

The Turks were surrounded and British troops were actually fighting in the streets of the town, but meanwhile Generals Dobell and Chetwode, after consultation in the afternoon, had decided to break off the fight if the town was not in our hands by nightfall.

Large Turkish forces had been converging on Gaza since four o'clock in the afternoon and reports, sent in by the mounted troops from the north, made it quite clear that they were sustaining such pressure as left only a small time margin of safety for a voluntary withdrawal, if a passage was to be kept open for the retirement of the mounted men.

As a precautionary measure the 54th Division was withdrawn from Sheik Abbas Ridge to the Mansurah Ridge.

This move was designed to bring it closer to the 53rd Division, but someone evidently blundered, since General

Digitized by Google

Dallas received no notification of the order being issued, nor did he, as late as six o'clock in the evening, know if the final assault upon Ali Muntar Ridge had been successful or not.

One might pause to remark that that same night an intercepted Turkish wireless message indicated that the beaten Gaza garrison had intended to surrender if further pressure was brought to bear upon it.

The withdrawal of the mounted troops left the right flank of the 53rd Division very much "in the air," and, in consequence, General Mudge's 162nd Infantry Brigade was ordered to move up and establish touch with the right flank of the 53rd Division, and there form a line facing the Beersheba Road, from which direction R.A.F. reports indicated that Turkish forces were advancing in strength. The route which the Brigade was to follow was quite unreconnoitred, and the maps issued were not at all helpful, as they consisted, in the main, of almost blank paper. Before darkness set in, however, it was possible to see that an ill-defined track led off in the direction the Brigade was to follow, but the position was only given in orders in co-ordinates, there being no other means of indicating on the blank maps objectives for battalions.

The 5th Bedfords led the Brigade over the broken ground behind Mansurah Ridge in the direction of Ali Muntar. The Battalion, in its turn, was guided by the Battalion Scouts, and, so difficult was the going, the Adjutant, Captain Yarde, had to count the number of paces in a matter of three miles, otherwise there would have been no means, in the darkness, of checking the distance covered. It worked out all right, as it happened, and by 10 p.m. the left flank of the Battalion was resting on the 53rd Division.

The Bedfords entrenched themselves during the night and when dawn broke became speedily engaged with the Turkish Infantry, who, under cover of machine gun fire, were trying to work round the flank of the 53rd Division.

Had a fresh attack been launched against Gaza on the

Digitized by Google

morning of the 27th it might well have carried the town before the Turkish reinforcements, then coming up, could have intervened. Misunderstandings and mistakes in the meantime had precluded all possibility of bringing the first Battle of Gaza to a successful conclusion.

Orders had apparently been issued during the night of the 26th–27th for the 53rd Division to withdraw to the line of Mansurah Ridge and Kurd Hill. This move was in progress and left the 5th Bedfords somewhat in the air. The Battalion was, however, able to hold on to its position until nine o'clock upon the morning of the 27th, when the Brigadier arrived in person and issued orders for the 5th Bedfords to withdraw and go into reserve near Tel el Amara.

This operation was likely to prove a difficult one to carry out, because in the depression of the Mansurah Ridge there was, at that time, considerable confusion.

Troops of the 53rd Division who had been in the attack were being collected there and reorganised. A number of Casualty Collecting Stations were very hard at work, since the casualties had been extremely heavy. Much camel transport encumbered everybody's efforts and a number of batteries were in action.

In the middle of all this muddle was an Arab selling oranges at a shilling apiece! This enterprising soul, having disposed of all his fruit, next produced a piece of looking-glass from his flowing garments and with it is said to have signalled in the direction of the enemy, possibly with the idea of indicating the position of the British guns. What he was doing was very soon discovered, and he was made short work of.

Soon after this two Turkish batteries came into action on the Sheik Abbas Ridge. From that position they enfiladed everything behind the Mansurah Ridge, so that the confusion became indescribable. Wounded camels were crashing into everything, the Casualty Collecting Stations were trying to get away their wounded and the field batteries, now under direct fire, were striving heroically to move their guns.

Digitized by Google

Every time the gun teams galloped up to the battery positions the Turkish shrapnel would whip down on them and invariably send one or more horses of the teams crashing to the ground in a kicking, squealing, struggling mass; but the gunners and drivers stuck pluckily to their task and eventually managed to get their guns away.

From all of the foregoing it will be seen that the 5th Bedfords had to face a task of considerable difficulty in disengaging themselves from the enemy they were holding off, and in passing through the scenes just described. The withdrawal was, however, accomplished with extraordinary success, but by means which may be described as the reverse of infiltration. The expedient adopted by the Commanding Officer was simple in the extreme. By his orders the Company Commanders pointed out to their men the Red Hill—Tel el Amara—which stood up as a distinctive feature of the landscape, and the men were then left to find their own way individually through the most amazing mess of men and beasts, which filled the depression behind the Mansurah Ridge. The result was that the whole Battalion concentrated subsequently at the Red Hill with very few casualties.

A period of several hours of inaction followed, during which the battle was going on all round, and the Battalion was held ready to move to any threatened point. The men could not understand why they were not allowed to advance, for they felt, as troops do sometimes know instinctively, that they had fairly got the upper hand of the foe.

At nightfall orders were issued for the whole force to move back again into the Inseirat Hills.

This would not have been a difficult operation, so far as the 5th Bedfords were concerned, but for the fact that about midday all animals had been sent back to water in the Wadi Ghuzze. It was known that the animals could be spared for two hours and advantage was taken of this. As things turned out these animals did not rejoin the Battalion that day. The officer in charge of them explained

Digitized by Google

afterwards that when he attempted to bring them back he was prevented from doing so by a Staff Officer, who said that he had been posted at the *wadi* to stop any transport of any kind whatsoever moving forward again on the 27th. It was pointed out to him that the animals in question comprised Regimental First Line Transport, and that, consequently, the Battalion could not move properly without them. Argument and explanation were, however, alike unavailing, and, accordingly, the Bedfords, lacking their First Line Transport, were forced to bury the medical panniers and the whole of the regimental reserves of ammunition.

The Signallers and Lewis Gunners, by that same token, must have been pretty stout fellows, and in very good heart, since they humped the whole of their equipment, and this load, in addition to their marching order, was just about as much as they could manage. The troops themselves lent a hand with the rest of the regimental gear, and it is believed that R.S.M. Milton was responsible for bringing away the P.R.I.'s box, with the regimental funds; but, anyway, all arrived at Inseirat pretty well whacked to the world after two most unsatisfactory days.

Subsequent to this action there was a persistent rumour that the "Staff Officer" who had caused all the trouble, by turning back the First Line Transport animals, was a German spy, disguised as a British officer.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER TEN

The Second Battle of Gaza

The first assault on Gaza had proved a failure. Our troops were back on their own side of the Wadi Ghuzze, but the Turks were too heavily beaten to follow them. How near we had been to victory is proved by the fact that at the time when the British attack was broken off, General Kress von Kressenstein had halted the Turkish columns, which were marching to the relief of Gaza, and Major Tiller, the German officer who commanded the Gaza garrison, had blown up his wireless station as a last measure preparatory to surrender.

From the 28th March to the 16th April, "all remained quiet upon the Eastern Front," so far as the "other ranks" were concerned. Officers commanding battalions and Company Officers, however, were constantly out reconnoitring the ground towards Gaza, against which place it was evident that a fresh attack was contemplated. The reconnaissances of the 5th Bedfords lay in the direction of the ground east of Sheikh Neban and on the Dorset House side of Wadi Nukabir.

On 30th March General Murray was instructed by cable to consider Jerusalem as his next objective, but the Turks, rejuvenated by their almost miraculous escape on 27th March, had stiffened their backs and were fully determined to bar the way. They put the whole of their 3rd Division into Gaza as a garrison, their 16th Division was posted at Tel esh Sadria and the gap between them was held by the Turkish 53rd Division and the 79th Regiment. Beersheba was occupied by two battalions and a battery.

Digitized by Google

Their Cavalry Reserve was based upon Huj and comprised the 3rd Turkish Cavalry Division.

These dispositions of the Turkish Forces gave the German General, Kress von Kressenstein, something like 18,000 rifles and over 100 guns in his front line.

The new Turkish line of defence was some three or four thousand yards long and stretched from the sea through a range of sand-hills to Samson's Ridge, some two miles south-west of the town. South of the town the position still had the strength of those infernal cactus hedges, which had so materially held up the previous advance of the 53rd Division. From the gardens and fields the line ran up the Ali Muntar Ridge to Outpost Hill. This ridge between Outpost Hill and Ali Muntar was the real heart of the position.

Although things were quiet on the Eastern Front the troops were given plenty of practice in the latest form of trench warfare, in view of the fact that, following upon the First Battle of Gaza, the Turks had constructed substantial entrenchments. The British troops were also practised in gas warfare and co-operation with tanks. These novelties were introduced because a few, none too effective tanks had been sent to Egypt and an insufficient number of gas and smoke shells were to be used.

The fact that the Turks had closed the gap between Gaza and Beersheba with a number of redoubts committed General Dobell to a strictly frontal attack against a strong position, if the Second Battle of Gaza was to be fought.

As already noted, the amount of aircraft support possible to the British operations was of a meagre nature. In fact, only twenty-five serviceable aeroplanes were available, and these not of so speedy a type as the German planes which served the Turks.

The advantage of surprise had been lost, and the railway, although it had reached Deir el Belah, was still eight or nine miles from Gaza.

The plan decided upon, after due consideration, for the second attack upon Gaza was to be in two stages. In the

Digitized by Google

first place the infantry were to attempt to capture a line from the sea to Sheik Abbas Ridge, which would bring them within striking distance of the principal defences of Gaza. The line was then to be consolidated and our heavy artillery brought up, after which the second stage of the battle was to be initiated with the main attack.

The task allotted to the 54th Division, in conjunction with the Imperial Camel Corps Brigade, was that of carrying the position Khirbet Sihan to Khirbet el Bir. It was a pretty formidable job, too, since the Turkish position included Tank Redoubt and the Beer group of trenches. If it succeeded in attaining its objective the Division was then to pivot on its left and attack the part of the Ali Muntar Ridge to the north of the Beersheba–Gaza Road. The 52nd Division was to attack across the Es Sire Ridge to Ali Muntar, while the 53rd Division would march up the coast to assault the south-western defences of Gaza. The Desert Column, reduced to two Mounted Divisions, was to execute a containing attack on the right of the Infantry with its eastern limit defined by Hareira. They had further orders for the pursuit of the enemy, in the event of success crowning the efforts of our infantry. The 74th Division, which was still without any artillery, was to form the General Reserve.

Let us now see how the 5th Bedfords were to fare in the forthcoming action.

Soon after the return of the Battalion to Inseirat, after the First Battle of Gaza, advance orders for the Second Battle came out. At that time the opposing armies were about five miles apart. Every advantage was taken of the intervening time to make all officers and many of the N.C.O.'s acquainted with the ground over which the next action would be fought. Small parties were taken out on patrol by the Commanding Officer, both by day and by night, until everybody had a working knowledge of the ground over which the advance was to be made. In the course of these expeditions there were several brushes with Turkish patrols. It became, indeed, something of a

Digitized by Google

form of amusement for the officers of the Battalion, who found the monotony of waiting for further action very tedious. To get out on a horse as a kind of mounted infantryman was regarded, in fact, as something rather out of the ordinary.

The advance started on the 16th April at 10 p.m., when C Company 1/5th Bedfords under Captain C. R. James moved out, to a ruined farm called Dorset House, to establish an outpost line in rear of which the remainder of the Battalion would concentrate. At 1 a.m. on the night of the 16th–17th April the rest of the Battalion, having meantime secured a few more hours of sleep, moved up to join C Company, and then the whole advanced forward up the dry bed of the Wadi Nukabir in the direction of Mansurah Ridge, where the Turkish outpost position was at that time established.

The first stage of the battle began early on 17th April, the 52nd and 54th Divisions crossing the Wadi Ghuzze and reaching their positions on the Es Sire Ridge at Kurd Hill–Mansurah–Sheik Abbas. There was little opposition and they suffered few casualties, but one of the tanks accompanying them was put out of action by shell-fire.

The 1/5th Bedfords had been ordered to attack upon a frontage of 1,000 yards at dawn, and in the last half-hour of darkness they deployed and were ready to advance. This they did as soon as it was light enough to see. Dawn showed them that they had carried out a good night's work, for they were then upon their proper line, while other battalions had failed to reach their allotted positions. Two such battalions, at least, crossed the front of the Bedfords as they began to move forward, and it was only the initiative of the officers and N.C.O.'s of the 5th Battalion, who had thoroughly studied the ground, that averted a great deal of confusion and led up to the successful assault upon the position.

By 7 o'clock that night the Battalion had secured a line some 600 yards long on Mansurah Ridge. C Company, which had supplied the original advanced guard, was taken

Digitized by Google

out into reserve and the new line consolidated and held from right to left by A, D and B Companies.

The day of the 18th April was spent in general consolidation by all the troops that had taken part in the first stage of the battle. The guns were brought up as planned and there was only intermittent shell-fire from the Turks. On the 19th the main attack, forming the second stage of the battle, was launched by the advance of the 53rd Division along the coast at 7.15 a.m., followed at 7.30 by the launching of the 54th and 52nd Divisions to the assault. Eight or nine miles to the east of the 54th Division the Imperial Mounted Division, on foot, attacked the Atawineh works, while the Anzac Mounted Division, designed to protect the flank, made a demonstration against Hareira. These various advances were preceded by a bombardment from all the British guns, reinforced with Naval fire from the sea. The bombardment commenced at 5.30 a.m.

The 54th Division attacked on the Turkish 3rd Division's front, and although the advance went well in the early stages it was soon held up all along the line by machine guns, which the Turks had concealed so cunningly that our artillery was unable to deal with them during the greater part of the day.

This state of things was, indeed, common everywhere, and, although the various attacks were carried out with the greatest gallantry, it soon became obvious that we had small chance of taking the Turkish position.

There seems no reason to doubt that the British advance was held up because the preliminary artillery bombardment was not sufficiently intense, while the gas shells took but little effect and such tanks as we had either broke down or were disabled by artillery fire.

On the right of the 54th Division the 163rd (Norfolk) Brigade, acting in concert with the Camel Brigade, won, and, for a time, held Tank Redoubt. The left of the 54th Division also reached the Turkish line, but could not penetrate it because of a heavy enfilade fire directed upon

Digitized by Google

our troops from Ali Muntar. The 52nd Division was held up at Outpost Hill, which was finally carried by the 155th (Scottish) Brigade of the 52nd (Lowland) Division at 10 o'clock in the morning, and there remained checked by the fire of Turkish machine guns concealed among the cactus hedges. Right away to the west the 53rd Division carried Samson's Ridge soon after midday, but could not penetrate beyond it.

The situation early on the afternoon of 19th April was that the British forces engaged had pushed forward as far as was possible without further support. The trouble was that any attempt to deploy further infantry units upon the open plains would only increase casualties without achieving the object of such deployment. Meanwhile the whole of the artillery was in action and the Higher Command was getting anxious lest the ammunition should run out.

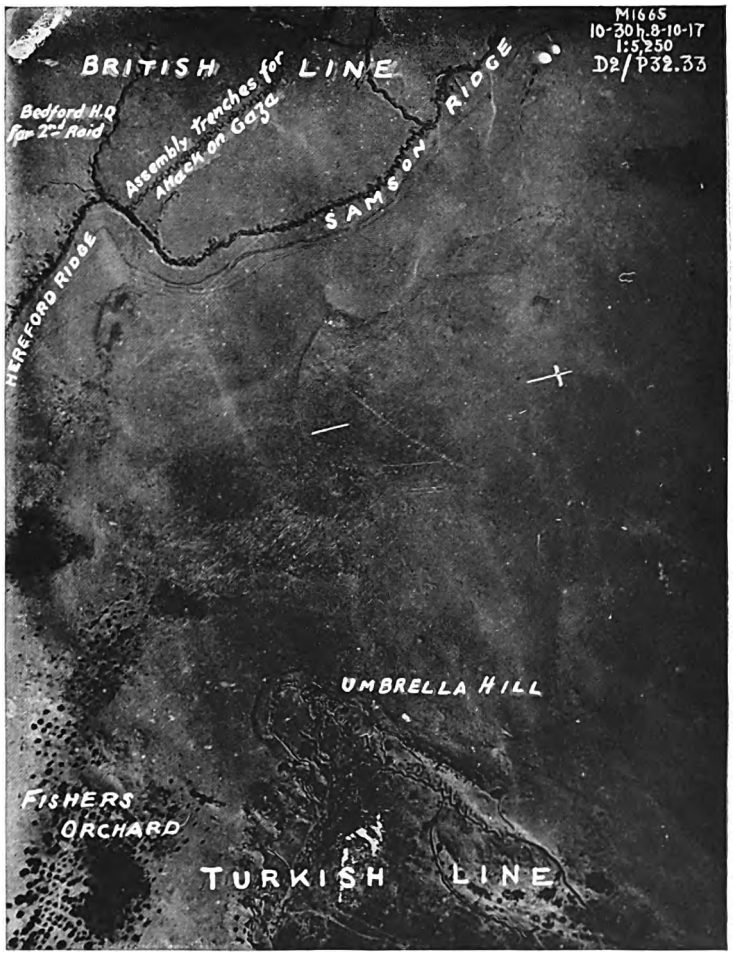
The 5th Bedfords had been held in Brigade Reserve during the greater part of the day, and it was not until late in the afternoon that orders were received for D Company to reinforce the 1/4th Northamptons, who had suffered very heavy casualties.

That evening General Dobell decided to break off the main action, with a view to attacking again under cover of a fresh bombardment upon the following morning.

Shortly before nightfall on the 19th the 5th Bedfords received orders to relieve the 4th Northants in the firing line.

Communication was established by telephone with Colonel John Brown, commanding the Northamptons, and information was asked for as to his position. He replied that he had no position, save for a line of dead men; and that he thought the best thing for the 5th Bedfords to do was to come to him along the telephone line, as this was their only hope of finding him in the open plain. Accordingly, as soon as it was dark, the Battalion went out in this way, advancing under heavy machine gun and shell-fire, and during the night a line of rifle pits,

Digitized by Google



PL. XIV.] PALESTINE, 1917. [*L*162

THE UMBRELLA HILL RAIDS.

Air photograph of Umbrella Hill, twice raided by the 5th Bedfords. This photograph was taken much later; no air photographs were available for the raids.

Digitized by Google

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R L

Digitized by Google

twenty-five paces apart and each holding seven men, was constructed. This line the Battalion held for the next 48 hours, until, on the night of the 21st, they were ordered to fall back to the Sheik Abbas Ridge and there occupy a new line.

Meanwhile reports that had reached General Dobell made him very doubtful whether his proposed further attack upon Gaza could be launched successfully on the morning of the 20th. The orders previously issued were, therefore, cancelled, and the positions we had won were consolidated. During the 19th the Turks had made many vigorous counter-attacks and that day Lieut. H. Wilkin and 2nd-Lieut. L. L. Brereton of the 5th Bedfords were wounded, the latter dying of his wounds ten days later. Some forty other ranks were returned as casualties, being either killed, wounded or missing. The total British losses at the Second Battle of Gaza, which, like the first, was unsuccessful, were 6,000, of which fully a half were suffered by the 54th Division, and many of the remainder by the 52nd Division.

The Turks had sustained no more than 2,000 casualties, and on the 20th General Kress von Kressenstein was eager to deliver a general counter-attack along the whole front, but Djemal Pasha would have none of it; and so, although we had won no signal victory, the Turks had again lost a great opportunity of defeating our designs for an advance on Jerusalem.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Umbrella Hill

Following upon the further reverse to the British arms at the Second Battle of Gaza both sides relapsed into a state of trench warfare. On 29th June General Murray was superseded by General Sir Edmund Allenby. Meantime, General Sir Phillip Chetwode had succeeded General Dobell at Eastern Force Headquarters, General Chauval was placed in command of the mounted troops, and General Chaytor, of the New Zealand Forces, was given the Anzac Mounted Division.

General Sir Edmund Allenby, who had commanded the 3rd Army in France, and recently secured a signal victory at Arras, brought with him to the East the very latest ideas of warfare from the Western Front, but he also insisted upon having adequate armament and equipment for the force.

Up to this point the British infantry had been facing German machine guns with no better support than could be provided by 24 guns (eight 18-pounders and four 4.5 howitzers) per Division, plus four batteries of four 60-pounders each and a mixed battery of two 6-inch howitzers and two 8-inch howitzers for the whole force. There had been originally eight tanks, but six of these were knocked out in the Second Battle of Gaza and left to decorate the countryside. Obviously, therefore, there was great need for guns, and one of the first things General Allenby insisted upon was an adequate supply of 6-inch Howitzer Batteries, with a few 8-inch and some long range guns.

Digitized by Google

The force was also equipped with sound ranging sets, later pattern aeroplanes and many other of the up-to-date appliances of modern warfare, which Sir Archibald Murray had not had at his disposal.

The chain of command was also reorganised and definite Corps with proper staffs came into being.

All this took time, however; and, meanwhile, all that Brigade and Battalion Commanders could do was to train their men hard and keep them in fighting trim by constant little scraps in No Man's Land, various trench raids and other minor enterprises to "blood" the reinforcements and keep the appetite for warfare of the old campaigners whetted.

Prior to the arrival of General Allenby, General Chetwode had already prepared a plan for our further offensive, and had drawn up an estimate of the troops that would be required. Both plan and estimate were accepted by the new G.O.C. in C. after he had thoroughly inspected the front.

The obvious line of advance was along the coast, which would allow the Navy to afford to the troops the fullest measure of support from their guns. Unfortunately, the Turkish defences had now become so strong that they could only be forced by protracted siege operations. The Turkish centre was also strong and there remained, therefore, only their left flank, which rested about Kauwukah some ten miles north of Beersheba. Before the Turkish left could be attacked, however, a preliminary subsidiary operation for the capture of Beersheba would be necessary.

At that time the Turkish forces were estimated at six Divisions and one Cavalry Division, approximately 46,000 rifles, 2,800 sabres, 250 machine guns, and 20 other guns.

Within a fortnight of reaching his new front General Allenby cabled home his proposed plan of operations in skeleton and his requisition for reinforcements. Everything he asked for was granted, except that it was not

Digitized by Google

found possible to give him quite his full complement of artillery.

The Eastern Force now ceased to exist and three separate Corps were organised as the Desert Mounted Corps, comprising the Anzac, Australian and Yeomanry Mounted Divisions commanded by General Chauval, the 20th Army Corps, comprising the 10th, 53rd, 60th, and 74th Divisions, commanded by General Chetwode, and the 21st Army Corps comprising the 52nd, 54th, and 75th Divisions, commanded by General Bulfin.

Other troops operating directly under General Headquarters were the Imperial Corps Brigade, the 7th Mounted Brigade, the Imperial Service Cavalry Brigade and the 20th Indian Infantry Brigade. For the projected assault upon the Turkish position, which was not to take place for some months, the British forces were to be divided into two wings and a covering force. The striking wing on the left was to comprise the 20th Corps and the Desert Mounted Corps (less one Division) numbering 47,500 rifles, 11,000 sabres and 242 guns. The covering force in the centre was to be made up of the 5,000 sabres and 12 guns, comprising Major-General Barrow's Yeomanry Mounted Division. The secondary attack on the Turkish position at Gaza was to be delivered by the 21st Corps containing the 5th Bedfords, comprising 35,000 rifles, 1,000 sabres and 218 guns.

The main difficulties of delivering a successful blow were the old ones of transport, water and secrecy. The use of mechanical transport was out of the question, since there were no metalled roads south of the Gaza–Beersheba line, and it was calculated that if every available scrap of transport was employed, including the trains of the three Divisions opposite Gaza, it would be just possible to keep the striking force supplied with food and ammunition up to Beersheba and for one day's march beyond that place.

The striking force alone would require a daily water ration of 400,000 gallons, all of which would have to be

Digitized by Google

carried by horse transport or camels. In these circumstances it was essential that Beersheba should come into our hands, since that place furnishes the last adequate water supply at the edge of the mountainous country. The terrain between the Wadi Ghuzze and Beersheba and between Beersheba and the Turkish left was quite waterless.

On the other hand, the too early delivery of the blow against Beersheba would frustrate the third essential to success, which was secrecy.

During the summer only the four Divisions which had fought in the Second Battle of Gaza and the 60th Division, which joined them in July, were available. The summer was a trying one with the temperature frequently up to 110 degrees. It must be remembered, further, that there was no shade, and the scorching *khamsin* blew often from the desert for days on end without a break. There was sand-fly fever and the constant knowledge that even the slightest scratch would turn septic, and yet the presence of General Allenby, who had moved his Headquarters from Cairo to a camp at Um el Kelab, near Rafa, and the knowledge that reinforcements were on the way kept every one cheerful.

Throughout the summer training behind the line went on with an eye to the preparation of the troops for open warfare and rapid marching. The troops were also educated to working on short water rations, down to half a gallon per day per man. At this time, too, continual raids were made against the enemy's trenches opposite Gaza.

It was in connection with two such raids that the 1/5th Bedfords played the principal part in instituting the present Divisional sign, which is that of an umbrella blown inside out.

The raids to which reference is made were those upon Umbrella Hill, carried out by detachments of the 484th Field Company R.E., 1/5th Bedfords, 2/1st (East Anglian) Field Ambulance R.A.M.C., and Divisional Signals,

Digitized by Google

supported by the 54th Divisional R.A., some Corps Artillery and the 162nd Machine Gun Company.

After these eminently successful raids had been executed the Divisional Commander himself chose an umbrella, blown inside out, for the Divisional sign, because of the success of these two operations, and the credit they reflected upon the Division as a whole.

Although the infantry work was done by the 1/5th Bedfords, it must not be forgotten that it was only rendered possible by the co-operation of the remainder of the Division:

The Divisional Artillery, who prepared and carried out the plan of artillery support.

The Divisional Engineers, who prepared the dumps, dug-outs, trench bridges and other works for the raid, and supplied the explosive party to accompany the 1/5th Bedfords.

The Divisional Signals, who laid the communications and maintained them throughout the heat of the operations.

The 162nd Machine Gun Company, who prepared and carried out the plan of machine gun support.

The Divisional Field Ambulance, who provided the dressing stations and tended the wounded under a hot fire.

And therefore the Divisional Commander considered it a Divisional operation and worthy to be commemorated in the Divisional sign, which remains to-day as the mark of the 54th (East Anglian) Division.

In connection with these two raids the operation map given in Plate XV was issued.

The enemy's trench position on Umbrella Hill formed an advanced work some 500 yards in front of his main line of defences and was about the same distance from our own line.

On the north and south the Turkish trenches were protected by a line of barbed-wire entanglements three to four yards broad and four feet in height, and on the west by knife rests. The hills upon which the work was situated

Digitized by Google

were entirely of sand rising in some places as high as 30 feet above the general level of the land over which the raid was to be made. The enemy's position appeared to consist of a fire trench following the crests of the hills, with a trench at the foot of the rear slopes, off which passages led to dug-outs burrowed in the rear slopes and furnished with numerous communication trenches opening into the fire trench.

Three communication trenches led back to the main position and a sunken road, which the Turks were believed to be constantly using.

Nothing was known of the strength of the garrison or of the position of machine guns. It was thought unlikely that there would be any deep dug-outs or fire trenches, other than those on the crests of the hills. It was known that all trenches were wide, and they were believed to be not very deep and only partly revetted with sand-bags.

The intention, as set out in the operation orders issued, was that the Umbrella Hill area as shown enclosed within the lines ZYXWV on the map printed in Plate XV should be raided on the night of the 20th–21st July. The garrison was to be killed or captured, all enemy arms, ammunition, equipment or other material collected or destroyed, and the position itself wrecked. Special orders were issued that some prisoners were to be taken for identification, and that all papers should be collected from the telephone office or the Turkish Headquarters post if located.

The concentration was to take place in the bivouac area of the 1/5th Bedfordshire Regt. two hours before zero, and the parties, as detailed, were to march to the place of assembly, in the front line trenches, which was to be reserved for the use of the raid for a period of two hours before and two hours after the time fixed as zero, which was 9 p.m. on the night of 20th July.

The concentration comprised 1 officer, 12 other ranks, 484th Field Company R.E., 16 officers, 613 other ranks, 1/5th Bedfords, Bearer Sub-Division 2/1st E.A. Field Ambulance R.A.M.C., and the force was divided as follows :

Digitized by Google

RAIDERS

Commander: Captain H. S. Armstrong, 1/5th Bedfordshire Regt.
R.E., 1 officer, 12 other ranks.
1/5*th Bedfords.*
Lieut. H. Wilkin
Lieut. B. W. Smythe
Lieut. W. A. Shaw
2nd-Lieut. R. H. Smith and
231 other ranks, with 3 Lewis guns.

SUPPORT

(To follow immediately after the raiders to a point close to the enemy's wire at the Turkish front trench.)
Commander: Captain E. T. Maier, 1/5th Bedfordshire Regt.
1/5*th Bedfords.*
Lieut. H. W. Cronin
2nd-Lieut. C. F. Buck and
147 other ranks, with 3 Lewis guns.

RESERVE

Commander: Major C. H. Miskin, 1/5th Bedfordshire Regt.
Captain F. B. Hobbs
2nd-Lieut. F. J. W. Gurney and
235 other ranks, with 4 Lewis guns.

The raiders were to wear jackets, shorts and puttees, helmets, with chin-strap down, equipment without pack, haversack, water-bottle, or entrenching tool and handle, with each man carrying 120 rounds S.A.A., and two sand-bags on the belt. The raiders were to carry white name boards with clear black lettering to place in position in accordance with the map to assist all ranks in finding their way about the enemy's position.

An important raid, such as was contemplated, needed, of course, the most careful preparation and rehearsal. This was taken in hand on the 10th July. Major C. H.

Digitized by Google

Miskin, with the aid of aeroplane photographs and plans, commenced the preparation of a replica of Umbrella Hill on which to practise. Captain H. S. Armstrong began to train the raiders, and a patrol of Captain Armstrong, Lieut. B. W. Smythe, and 2nd-Lieut. R. H. Smith and two other ranks spent about an hour and a half in No Man's Land between our trenches and Umbrella Hill. The following day Captain E. T. Maier commenced training the supports, while Captain Armstrong carried on with the instruction of the raiders.

This practice went on every day, and on the 16th Raid Orders were issued. Meanwhile R.S.M. Milton had been at work on the dump of stores at the place of assembly which was shelled for a time on the 19th when one sergeant was wounded.

The order of march from the point of departure to Umbrella Hill is shown in the diagram given below :—

ORDER OF MARCH FROM POINT OF DEPARTURE TO UMBRELLA HILL

Screen : Lieut. B. W. Smythe, 2 Corporals, 10 other ranks.

. . . . . .

Lt. H. Wilkin, 2 O.R.		Lt. W. A. Shaw, 2 O.R.	2nd-Lt. R. H. Smith, 2 O.R.	
No. 4 B. Sect.	No. 3 B. Sect.		No. 2 B. Sect.	No. 1 B. Sect.
No. 9 B. Sect.	No. 7 B. Sect.		No. 6 B. Sect.	No. 5 B. Sect.
		Raiders' H.Q.		
No. 4 Moppers up.	No. 3 Moppers up.		No. 2 Moppers up.	No. 1 Moppers up.

Digitized by Google

Order of March—continued.

No. 8 Moppers up.	No. 7 Moppers up.		No. 6 Moppers up.	No. 5 Moppers up.
	L.G. No. 3	L.G. No. 2	L.G. No. 1	
No. 4 Demolition.	No. 3 Demolition.		No. 2 Demolition.	No. 1 Demolition.
		R.E. Party and Escort.		
Stretcher Bearers.				Prisoners' Escort.
	No. 3 Sect. Right Sector Reserve.	No. 2 Sect. Right Sector Reserve.	No. 1 Sect. Right Sector Reserve.	
	No. 3 Sect. Left Sector Reserve.	No. 2 Sect. Left Sector Reserve.	No. 1 Sect. Left Sector Reserve.	

By six o'clock in the evening the artillery had cut three gaps in the enemy wire in front of his first line trench. At five minutes to nine the 8-inch howitzers began to shell Dug-out Alley, and at zero hour the artillery opened an intense bombardment of the enemy's position, crept back clear of the area to be raided and put down a box barrage as shown in the operation map, Plate XV, which was maintained until the raiders finally withdrew. The machine guns co-operated in forming the box barrage, and also supplied overhead fire; and, as a diversion, artillery fire was opened from the Sheik Abbas Sector, and a considerable volume of covering musketry fire was built up.

All ranks of the raiders had been carefully taught that they must keep right up to the artillery barrage and that it was quite safe to keep within 100 yards of our high explosive shells, and to be in such a place that our shrapnel

Digitized by Google

would burst immediately overhead. They were also warned that there would be a considerable amount of overhead machine gun fire from our own lines which would sound very close, despite which they would be perfectly safe from the machine gun bullets within the limits rehearsed, either in the trenches or on the top in the enemy's position.

These were matters which it was very important should be clearly understood, since the whole success of the operation depended upon the raiders dashing into the enemy trenches with the bayonet as the barrage lifted, and before the Turks had time to recover from it.

While the majority of the raiders were prepared to act as bombers if necessary, it was clearly impressed upon them that the bayonet was to be relied upon principally and the bomb only resorted to if progress could not otherwise be made: a sound principle, since a determined rush with the bayonet always stands a better chance of success, and with less risk of casualties to the attackers. Bombing is too slow. The raiders, of course, started out with bayonets fixed, but, as firing was not required of them, they marched with the magazines of their rifles charged, but with cut-off closed and nothing in the chamber.

The party, as detailed for the raid on Umbrella Hill, left camp at 7 p.m., and marched to the place of assembly. Punctually at five minutes to nine they went over the top and moved to the position of deployment which had been previously reconnoitred. At this point conditions became difficult as, in the absence of any wind, smoke and dust caused by the high explosive shells completely destroyed visibility. The work of the British artillery, however, throughout the whole action can only be described as magnificent, and it inspired all ranks with the greatest confidence. At nine o'clock the raiders advanced to within about 100 to 150 yards of Front Trench, and confidently lay down within 100 yards of our barrage, in which there was not a single premature or short burst. The barrage, in fact, was perfect, and while it was down no

Digitized by Google

enemy machine gun opened and hostile rifle-fire remained negligible. As soon as the barrage lifted the advance of the infantry was resumed. The Turkish wire had been practically demolished by the artillery, and it took the advanced guard under Lieut. B. W. Smythe but a few seconds to clear the way, and then Front Trench was rushed and a machine gun taken.

Within a few seconds of the artillery barrage lifting our machine guns opened from El Arish Redoubt and the Plantation. Thereafter the machine gun barrage was excellently carried out and worked without a hitch.

The few Turks who put up a fight to hold on to Front Trench were quickly shot down or bayoneted, and there Captain Armstrong made his headquarters.

Our troops experienced difficulty in keeping touch during the final rush, owing to the smoke clouds and the unduly large and unnecessarily unwieldy number of the troops engaged; there was considerable congestion on entering Front Trench, and a certain amount of confusion.

The different sector parties, however, quickly won clear.

Lieut. Smythe, moving over the open with a small party, soon reached and cleared Cross Cut. The next sector party, under Lieut. W. A. Shaw, moved along Side Trench; Silk Alley was made good and touch established with the right sector through Tassel Corner. Bombing sections then worked up Cover Alley and Side Trench. Cover Alley proved hard to carry, for the Turks put up a stern defence. Those in the trench were, however, killed or hunted out after a short hand-to-hand encounter, and then our men turned their attention to the dug-outs. These were occupied by a considerable number of Turks, who refused either to surrender or to come out and fight, and were, therefore, bombed in their lurking places.

Once in the trenches it was quickly apparent that we had still something to learn both about night fighting and trench warfare. The fact of the matter was that far too big a force had been employed to be manageable. In a

Digitized by Google

very short time the trenches became blocked by the excessive number of our own men, and progress got so slow that neither Stick Alley nor Point Trench had been reached when the signal of recall was given.

The right sector, under 2nd-Lieut. R. H. Smith, entered the enemy trenches at Stay Alley. This proved to be nothing more than a shallow ditch and, passing quickly down it, the men went on by Echelon Trench and made for Tassel Corner, where there was some congestion of troops. Dug-out Alley was found to be equipped with numerous shelters and dug-outs, each occupied by from three to six Turks. Five of these dug-outs, which the occupants refused to leave, had to be bombed. Just as Lieut. Smith's raiding party had reached the end of Dug-out Alley at 9.35 p.m., the signal for recall was given. Meanwhile a bombing section worked down Echelon Trench where they killed about ten Turks and took several prisoners. They also found a large minenwerfer, and as it was too big to bring away they put it out of action by exploding bombs in its working parts.

At 9.35 p.m. the raiders, whose casualties had not exceeded two or three, withdrew without molestation. They had done a great deal of damage to the demoralised Turks, who had flung themselves flat on the ground and refused to get up, while those who had taken refuge in the dug-outs were equally obstinate in their refusal to quit them. In these circumstances our men had no option but to bayonet the enemy where they lay and to bomb them in their dug-outs.

While all these things were taking place in the heart of the enemy's position the Turkish artillery in rear had turned on an intense fire, which opened at five past nine with a perfect rain of 5.9 high explosive shells. By sheer bad luck the enemy's guns were registering steadily on the Battalion's Battle Headquarters, and communication trenches in the vicinity, and the aid post. This fire was maintained steadily until 11.30 p.m., and continued intermittently from that hour until 3.30 a.m. on the

Digitized by Google

morning of the 21st. One of these shells landed on the R.E. dug-out and killed every one in it.

To make matters worse the enemy also put down a shrapnel barrage in front of our trenches at the time when some of the last parties of our raiders were returning. Major Miskin sent runners out to divert these parties so that they might avoid this barrage, but all of them became casualties before achieving their object and, consequently, the area around Battle Headquarters was soon congested with killed and wounded. A large proportion of Battalion Headquarters were wounded. Many of the returning raiders became casualties after reaching our lines, but the number would have been infinitely greater, had not the place for roll call been altered from that previously arranged.

As dawn was breaking on the morning of the 21st the British raiders collected their dead and buried them near the Headquarters of the raid.

But for the devotion to duty and cool courage of Lieut.-Colonel C. H. Miskin, then an Acting Major, who was in command of the reserve Company, the casualties would have been infinitely greater. The splendid work he did during the first Umbrella Hill raid gained for him the award of the Military Cross.

His duties were to keep the raiders supplied with such personnel and material as they required, as well as to man our trenches in case of enemy counter-attack.

When the enemy brought down an intense 5.9 barrage on our trenches round about the area where Battalion Headquarters was situated there was danger of some confusion, but Major Miskin, regardless of his own safety, moved about here, there, and everywhere, directing and encouraging, and it was due to his efforts and cool courage that the traffic was diverted into safer routes and many lives were saved.

Unfortunately, just as Major Miskin was entering the Headquarters dug-out, to make a report to the Commanding Officer, a 5.9 shell exploded and blew him into the dug-out,

Digitized by Google

also wounding most of the occupants. He was very badly wounded in the thigh and probably owes his life to the efforts of Sergeant Sharpe, who, returning with his party from the raid, saw what had happened and remained behind to tend Major Miskin. Shortly afterwards another shell blew in the entrance to the dug-out; a fragment striking Sergeant Sharpe wounded him in the jaw and knocked out several of his teeth. Quite unperturbed he mumbled: "That will save a dentist." Then he went calmly on with his self-appointed task of dressing Major Miskin's wounds. Later he got his officer back on a stretcher, as many of the R.A.M.C. bearers were themselves casualties.

Sergeant Sharpe had already performed gallant work in the raid itself for which he received the D.C.M.

The Military Cross was awarded, also, to Captain Cunningham, R.A.M.C., who was the Regimental Medical Officer at the time of the Umbrella Hill raid.

His duty was to organise the regimental aid posts, and arrange the evacuation of the wounded. For this purpose his Regimental Stretcher Squad was reinforced by personnel from the Divisional Field Ambulances.

During the operation the regimental aid post was heavily shelled by Turkish 5.9 Batteries, and suffered many casualties. The work of tending the wounded and getting them away was seriously interfered with and it was only Capt. Cunningham's coolness and courage which set an example to his men that prevented confusion and greater loss.

It was extraordinary bad luck that the Bedfords should have cleared Umbrella Hill practically without a casualty and yet have caught it so hot coming back.

Several important lessons were learned from that action, one of the principal of them being that dug-outs used for battle Headquarters, signal office and aid post should be something more than splinter-proof and that protection should be provided for the doorways.

General Mudge, commanding the 162nd Brigade, of the

Digitized by Google

54th Division, in his subsequent report upon the action, emphasised very strongly the fact that although sixteen miles of cable were especially laid, practically all communications were cut by hostile shell-fire at an early stage of the proceedings.

In that action one Turkish officer and from 105 to 135 Turkish other ranks were killed and eighteen prisoners taken, while of the British force the R.F.A. liaison officer was wounded, the R.E. had two other ranks wounded, the 1/5th Bedfords lost four officers wounded, and of the other ranks nineteen were killed, sixty-eight wounded, and eight missing. The 2/1st Field Ambulance had one officer wounded, six other ranks wounded, and six killed; and the 54th Divisional Signal Company lost one killed and one wounded of the other ranks.

This raid on Umbrella Hill was regarded as one of the largest and most important of such raids throughout the whole campaign.

Among many telegrams of congratulation received by the Commanding Officer upon the following day was one from the G.O.C., 54th Division, conveying his high appreciation of the fine achievement of the 1/5th Bedfords in carrying through the raid, and stating his regrets at the losses incurred after the raid had been carried out, which seemed to be due to sheer bad luck.

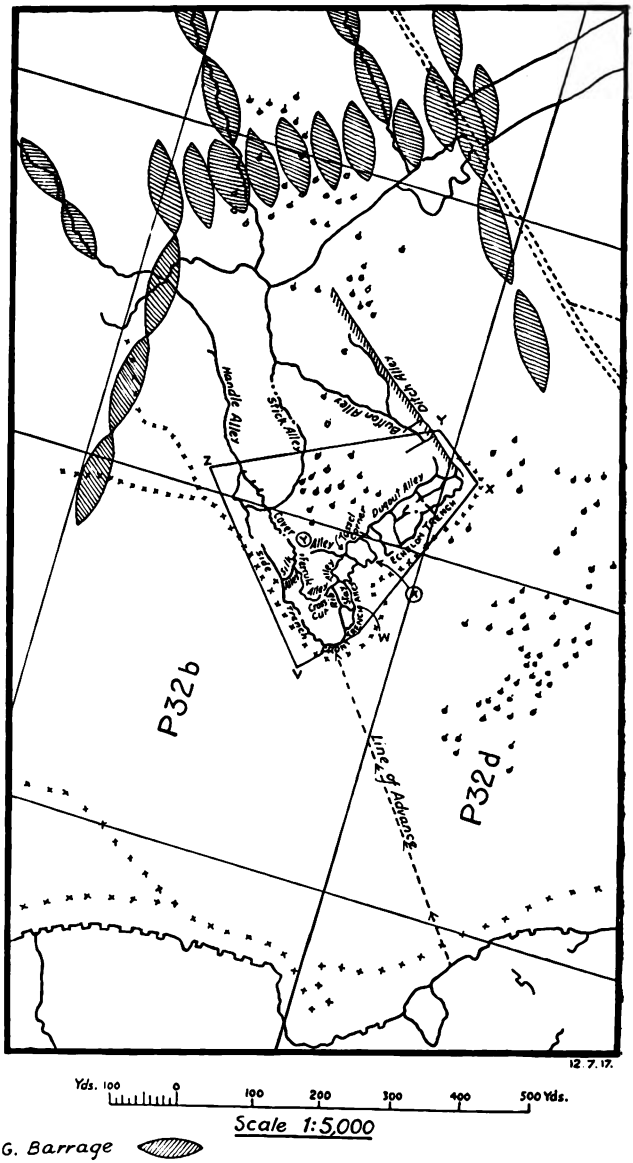
On the 23rd July Major-General S. W. Hare, G.O.C., 54th Division, presented nineteen Military Medals to members of the raiding party for gallantry in action during the raid on Umbrella Hill, and it is noteworthy that no less than sixteen of the recipients were men of the 1/5th Bedfords.

On 22nd July Lieut.-Colonel Clive Garcia, G.S.O.1. 54th Division, wrote to Lieut.-Colonel Brighten a letter referring to a discussion they had had upon the previous day regarding a proposed organised bombardment of the Turkish front after clearing our own trenches. Since that conversation Lieut.-Colonel Garcia had evidently thought things over and another idea had occurred to him. This

Digitized by Google

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R L

Digitized by Google


Middle Alley
Strick Alley
Bulfin Alley
Otter Alley
Support Dump Alley
Trench
Trench
Trench

was that Umbrella Hill should again be raided, as many as possible of the officers and other ranks who had taken part in the first raid to form the nucleus of the second raiding party.

He stated frankly that the Bedfords had done magnificently, had emerged with flying colours from a very trying experience and might reasonably claim to be allowed to rest upon their laurels. In favour of his plan he stated that the Turks would not have had time to alter their arrangements as regards barrages, etc., so that we might reasonably count upon the same areas being shelled as before and regulate our movements accordingly; that they would not have had time to repair their wire, trenches or dug-outs or to restore confidence in the old or instil it into the new garrison; that the previous experience would be of the greatest value to the Bedfords; that the Turks, when the bombardment opened, would certainly not anticipate a second raid upon Umbrella Hill; that the killing of another 100 Turks, with consequent depression of *morale* of the remainder, was a highly desirable thing and that such an enterprise would have the best possible effect upon the offensive spirit of the Division, and would be a very great feather in the cap of the Bedfords. He left the matter, however, quite open for Colonel Brighten's consideration, and specifically pointed out that the suggestion emanated from himself personally, and had not, at that time, been mentioned to the Divisional Commander.

On the 24th the Battalion received orders for a second raid on Umbrella Hill, to be carried out on the 27th. Preparations were started at once and the various modifications, especially in the size of the parties employed, were discussed and decided on. Practice started at once and good progress was made with dug-outs and the collection of stores. The latter was not such an easy matter as might appear on the surface, since some material, such as safety-pins and cotton for identification armlets, had to be got from Cairo. On the 25th, however, Raid Order No. 2 was issued.

Digitized by Google

The second raid was arranged generally on the same lines as that of 20th July, the objects being to reduce the enemy's man power and to capture or destroy his material, especially three remaining minenwerfers and three remaining machine guns.

The numbers to take part in the second raid were greatly reduced from those employed in the first raid. They were divided as follows :—

RAIDING PARTY

Commander : Capt. H. S. Armstrong, 1/5th Bedfords.
R.E., 1 Officer, 7 other ranks.
1/5*th Bedfords*
4 Officers, 111 other ranks.

SUPPORT

1/5*th Bedfords*
3 Officers, 71 other ranks, and 1 Lewis gun.

TRENCH PARTY

1/5*th Bedfords*
1 Officer, R.S.M., and 60 other ranks.

CHECKING PARTY AND MEDICAL PARTY

Approximately as before.

The night of the 27th was one of bright moonlight and very quiet up to zero hour, which was again fixed at nine o'clock. A machine gun and a Lewis gun in our line were sniping the gap in the enemy wire which had been cut by the artillery during the afternoon. Apart from this and an occasional rifle shot from the Turks on Umbrella Hill there was no sign of any activity.

The raiders and support left our trenches at zero hour. The advance was carried out very rapidly, and a check of about a minute had to be made at the bean field, near the foot of Umbrella Hill, as the men were getting too near to the artillery barrage. This was working as perfectly as upon the previous occasion, although during the second raid it does not seem to have taken so much effect upon the

Digitized by Google

enemy's trenches. Front Trench itself was practically undamaged and the Turks had their heads up and were using both machine guns and rifles from Front Trench and Echelon Trench from about three minutes past nine onwards. Meanwhile good support was being given by the Stokes guns. A section of the 162nd L.T.M. Battery searched and swept some bushes where the enemy was known to have an advanced post, and their fire must have been very effective since no opposition was met with from that flank.

After the momentary check in the bean field the raiders dashed up the hill. The few remaining strands of wire in the gaps were cleared by the advanced screen, and bombing sections leapt into Front Trench at six minutes past nine.

One of the Turkish machine guns, which were proving so troublesome, was mounted on the parapet of Front Trench and supported by a section of riflemen. This was rushed by our troops and the gunners and such of the remaining Turks as could not escape from the trench were all bayoneted. The further advance of the raiders then met with stiff opposition, and a most bloody duel with bombs and rifle fire at close range ensued. Our troops speedily gained the upper hand, however, and had reached the line of Cross Cut by a quarter past nine, when a whistle was blown, and as that was the signal that had been arranged for withdrawal, it seems to have been taken up on all sides and the raiders did, in fact, withdraw. Exhaustive subsequent enquiry seems to suggest that the signal emanated from the Turkish side, more especially as it was coincident with a further withdrawal of the Turks themselves.

The four bombing sections of the raiding party performed prodigies of valour. No. 1 Section worked along Stay Alley towards Echelon Trench, but met with a low barricade after they had covered about a dozen yards. The Turks who were holding it were quickly bombed out, and a further advance of two dozen yards was made to the entrance of

Digitized by Google

Echelon Trench, where a yet higher barricade had been erected. This also had been bombed and rushed when the whistle went. In Rib Alley, meanwhile, the Turks were making a determined stand against No. 2 Section, but had just been dislodged when the sound of the whistle was heard also in that sector. This fight in Rib Alley had held up the advance of No. 3 Section over the top of Cross Cut, which they had just entered when the whistle blew. No. 4 Section had perhaps the hardest fight of the four, for it was they who captured the Turkish machine gun on Front Trench parapet, bayoneting two gunners and shooting down a third. They then passed back the gun to the support before making their way up Side Trench. They were then held up by a strong post across the open from Cross Cut to Side Trench before the same false whistle called them back.

Upon this occasion the fight put up by the Turks was of a very much stouter nature than had been met with a week earlier. Finally, the raiders withdrew in good order, but were unable to bring in their dead. It is believed, however, that no wounded were left behind.

No booty was recovered, and there was a good deal of mystery about the fate of the captured machine gun. It passed through the hands of Officer Commanding Support, and was seen well on its way towards the British lines, but it was not known who were the men that were carrying it, and from the time they took it over it entirely disappeared. A patrol went out later on the night of the raid to try to find it, but without success. They were fired on by two Turks hidden in a bush, whom they at once rushed and bayoneted, and whose rifles and bayonets they brought in.

To summarise: the British raiding party had met with a stubborn resistance everywhere, but the sections were of a more handy size this time and there was no confusion. Each section dashed for its own objective and after a number of hard bombing duels the Turks began to give way, and everything appeared to be going in our favour when that fatal whistle was blown.

Digitized by Google

There had been no time to collect prisoners or booty, but at least fifty Turks had been killed. The Bedfords' casualties were three killed, seven missing, and twenty-three wounded, including four who remained on duty. 2nd-Lieut. Coate and 2nd-Lieut. H. W. E. Smith were also wounded.

Some years after the war an officer of the Iraq Army attended the Senior Officers' School in India, as a student. This officer talked to Lieut.-Colonel Brighten, who was an Instructor at the School, and told him that he was on the Staff of the Turkish Command at Gaza at the time of these two raids. On the second occasion a relief was in progress, both the outgoing and incoming garrisons were in the position, which accounts for the numbers of Turks then encountered.

He stated, further, that the barrage was most effective in the first raid, but not so in the second ; nevertheless, the casualties to the Turks were heavier in both raids than the figures claimed by us.

Again the Battalion was heartily congratulated and the telegram received by Colonel Brighten from G.O.C. Eastern force was much valued. This is how it ran :— " Eastforce wire begins aaa the G.O.C. again congratulates the 5th Bedford Regiment who have certainly set the pace to the rest of the force by their fine work ends aaa for information."

After their raids on Umbrella Hill on 20th and 27th July, the Bedfords were also praised by General Allenby, who published in Army Orders throughout the Egyptian Expeditionary Force an order to be read to all units three times on parade exhorting them to emulate the fine example set by the 1/5th Bedfords. In connection with these raids Capt. H. S. Armstrong, an old Bedfordian, was awarded the Military Cross, and given command of a Battalion of the Norfolk Regiment.

The raids are said to have been two of the biggest and most successfully executed of any in the Palestine campaign.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER TWELVE

The Third Battle of Gaza

The two raids upon Umbrella Hill, so splendidly carried out by the 5th Bedfords, were part of the normal activities of the summer of 1917, when the preparations were going steadily forward for the great autumn push, which was designed and destined to smash down the gateways to the Holy Land.

The Bedfords had done two fine jobs of work, of that there is not the slightest doubt; and, for the rest of the summer, were asked only to bear their share of such general warfare as was going on, but they did drop in for a great deal of digging.

From 11th August to 16th September Lieut.-Colonel Brighten took temporary command of the 162nd Infantry Brigade, and in the early part of his absence from his own command the Battalion came under Captain James, but he in turn was detached to attend a Senior Officers' Course at Zetoun and Captain Maier filled the position of Acting Commanding Officer until Colonel Brighten returned from Brigade.

Meanwhile, right through the summer, the Turks maintained their superiority in the air, a circumstance which rendered doubly difficult the task of making in secret the very considerable administrative preparations which were necessary before a large force could be launched against Beersheba, some twenty miles distant from Railhead. In addition, many native spies got round the open flank to study the dispositions of our troops and at least one German, disguised as a British or Australian officer, penetrated our lines.

Digitized by Google

But what could not be hidden was used to deceive the enemy, and the bulk of the troops intended for the Beersheba attack were held massed against Gaza until the last possible moment.

In this work of misleading the Turk our Intelligence people, too, showed remarkable ingenuity. Staff Officers "lost" their maps and note-books, and everything contained therein was designed to make the enemy believe that any preparations he might apprehend against Beersheba were really designed to distract his attention from Gaza. And there was another expedient which served a double purpose.

This was the fortnightly cavalry reconnaissance carried out towards Beersheba. In the first place it was likely to mislead the Turk, when the time came, into regarding the opening phase of the real push as nothing more than another reconnaissance, and, meanwhile, under cover of the cavalry's fortnightly manœuvre, the British Staff were able to make a thorough exploration of the difficult ground over which the attack would have to be made.

Steps were taken, also, to inculcate a belief in the mind of the Turk that a landing in force in rear of Gaza was being planned.

Thus was our enemy kept guessing right up to the last moment. The Battle of Beersheba was planned for 31st October, but a week before that day Gaza was to be given a real battering by our guns, both on land and from the sea.

At the end of September the 5th Bedfords took over No. 4 Section of the Coastal Sector from the 4th Norfolks and struck a pretty hot patch of patrol work. Here is a fair sample of a week's work in the Hereford Ridge Sector.

On 1st October 2nd-Lieut. Pinchin went out with a patrol of four men and reconnoitred the ground between Hereford Ridge and Umbrella Hill on a quarter mile front. The same night 2nd-Lieut K. M. Watt went out from the right company with three men to select sniping posts for day use, but neither he nor any of his men

Digitized by Google

returned. Later on 2nd-Lieut. R. E. Otter took out a patrol to look for the missing party, but found no trace of them. Five days later 2nd-Lieut. E. E. Dennis was captured and subsequently a hostile aeroplane dropped a letter from him, dated 7th October 1917, in our lines, in which he stated that Watt had died of wounds.

On 2nd October a prisoner came down from Right Company Headquarters. He had been captured by two of our snipers who had been pushed out into the orchard and was one of two Turks who had been picking figs just outside the enemy trenches. At dusk that evening a large patrol of two officers with 26 men and a couple of Lewis guns went out, and three casualties occurred. During the night of the 4th October yet another patrol of three officers and 46 other ranks with three Lewis guns left the line near the Subket Post and came up against a heavy fire. Lieut. E. B. Wodehouse was fatally wounded and six other ranks more or less seriously hit. It was believed, however, that some loss had been inflicted upon the enemy, as they were prevented from coming to close quarters by our rifle and Lewis gun fire.

The 5th and 6th were again busy days.

Six o'clock in the evening was a favourite time for the patrols to go out and at that hour on 4th October three patrols, two of one officer and six other ranks each, and the third of one officer and nine other ranks, started out to cause the Turks as much trouble as possible. The scheme was that one patrol should advance into Fisher's Wood and entice the Turks to follow it back to a line the second patrol was holding. 2nd-Lieut. Dennis found the Turks all right and began to lure them on, but, unfortunately, they spotted the trap in time and so 2nd-Lieut. Gurney and his men were denied their night's sport. The third, or right, patrol had gone out under 2nd-Lieut. Mander to lie in wait for any Turkish patrols that might be wandering about, but they had no luck at all upon that particular occasion.

At the usual hour, 6 o'clock, patrols commanded by

Digitized by Google

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
X L

Digitized by Google

PL. XVI.]

PALESTINE,
THIRD BATTLE OF
Air photograph showing line of advance of 5th B

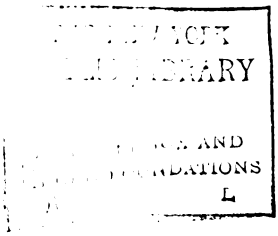
Digitized by Google

STINE, 1917. [N 186

ATTLE OF GAZA.

ol 5th Bedfords from Sea Post to Sheikh Hassan.

Digitized by Google



Digitized by Google

2nd-Lieuts. Dennis, Phillips and Sowden went out on the same sort of scheme as had been tried upon the previous night, but 2nd-Lieut. Dennis's party had to withdraw under a heavy fire, and when the party got in it was found that the officer and Sergt. Clifford were both missing. The other patrols indulged in a lot of shooting, but were back safely by four o'clock on the morning of the 6th.

That was the day that A, C, and D Companies took over Merioneth Redoubt and the front line of Hereford Ridge Sector and sent out a strong patrol of 3 officers, 3 warrant officers, and 46 other ranks, with 3 Lewis guns, who located and engaged the enemy in Fisher's Orchard. They sent back a code word to Brigade, zero hour was fixed, and the 4.2-inch howitzers and the Stokes guns opened up on Echelon Trench. Ten minutes later a barrage was put down by 18 pounder field guns and machine guns. Shortly afterwards the patrol rushed out again, but met with such strong opposition that Captain F. B. Hobbs, who was in command, thought it advisable to withdraw from the enemy's wire, which his patrol had reached, so that the guns could put down a fresh barrage closer to our lines. This was done and a number of the enemy were caught by it. Our own casualties were one killed and six wounded.

And this epitomises but one week's normal patrol work of the " quiet " period.

At this time the Turks held a strong position, extending from the sea at Gaza inland to Beersheba, some 25 to 30 miles away. Gaza had been made into a strong, modern, defended position, heavily entrenched and wired. It offered every facility for a protracted defence.

The remainder of the enemy's defences comprised a series of strong localities, joined up to form practically one continuous line. They were the Sihan group of works, the Atawineh group, the Baha group, the Abu Hareira system of trenches and the works covering Beersheba.

The distance from Gaza to Beersheba was considerable, but lateral communications were good and the enemy could reinforce quickly any threatened part of his line.

Digitized by Google

The British forces occupied, roughly, the area Gaza–Shellal–Deir el Belah, at which last-named place was our Railhead. The scheme, already briefly outlined, was to deliver the principal offensive against the left flank of the Turkish main position, that is to say Hareira and Sheria. And, as has been seen, the capture of Beersheba was a necessary preliminary to this operation, in order to secure water supplies and room for the deployment of the attacking force.

Umbrella and Outpost Hills were to be the scenes of the first steps towards the capture of Beersheba and the Third Battle of Gaza, and the attacks upon them were yet other moves designed to draw the Turks' attention from Beersheba.

On 27th October an intensive bombardment of Gaza began and the same night the 3/3rd Gurkhas made a very successful raid upon Outpost Hill, while the Desert Column (less the Yeomanry Division) was busy carrying out its deployment against Beersheba, and during the night of the 30th–31st some 40,000 British troops of all arms were moving into their allotted positions.

At 3 a.m. on the morning of the 31st October all the assaulting troops were in position. Soon afterwards the battle commenced and before dusk had fallen, Beersheba, with its vital wells almost intact, was in our hands.

One is tempted to describe that battle in detail, but space will not permit and I suppose every Britisher knows already the splendid story of how the greatly daring Australian Light Horse charged, mounted, clean over two lines of enemy trenches and then, while some dismounted and cleaned up with the bayonet, others of their comrades swept on like a whirlwind right into the town.

It must now be remembered that the 5th Bedfords were a unit of the 162nd Brigade of the 54th Division, which, in its turn, belonged to the 21st Army Corps, and that it was General Allenby's intention that after the 20th Corps had turned the Turkish flank at Beersheba the 21st Corps should distract the Turkish Commander's attention by

Digitized by Google

attacking Gaza, and so gain the forty-eight hours needed to develop the water resources at Beersheba, to reconnoitre the Turkish work, previously examined only from the air, and to get the troops and guns into position for the launching of the main battle.

The circumstance of the Turks being so hustled out of Beersheba that they had not waited, except in a few cases, to fire the charges which would have destroyed the wells, and the first reports on the water being good, determined General Allenby that the attack on the Turkish left could take place on 3rd November or, at latest, on 4th November. Lieut.-General Sir E. S. Bulfin's 21st Corps was ordered, therefore, to attack Gaza on the night of 1st–2nd November. Should this attack succeed the main plan was, broadly, to break through on a frontage of about 3,000 yards between Gaza and the sea. The fact that naval support from the sea was available probably went far to influence this decision.

The actual assault upon Gaza was entrusted to the 54th Division, under Major-General Hare, plus the 156th Infantry Brigade of the 52nd (Lowland) Division.

The position to be attacked was within a belt of sand dunes, stretching from the sea to that horrible maze of cactus hedges which had held our troops up so terribly in the two previous battles, and this front extended over 5,000 yards from Umbrella Hill to the sea.

The Turkish defences were strong, well protected by barbed wire, and of a considerable depth. The area of penetration was to vary from 1,000 yards on the right at Umbrella Hill to as much as 3,000 yards on the extreme left, where the objective was to be Sheik Hassan, which overlooked the Gaza anchorage.

As a preliminary phase to the attack of General Hare's Division, Umbrella Hill, which jutted out from the Turkish Lines and flanked their trenches further west, was to be stormed by the 7th Battalion The Scottish Rifles (plus one company of the 8th Battalion attached), belonging to the 156th Brigade of the 52nd Division.

Digitized by Google

Zero hour for the attack upon Umbrella Hill was fixed at 11 p.m. on 1st November, and before that hour the Cameronians assembled well in advance of our trenches. Despite the intensity of the bombardment of the British guns, which had been steadily increasing since it commenced on 27th October, the Turks were still holding on to their forward post in the clump of trees known as Fisher's Orchard. Thus, they were warned of the attack and opened a heavy fire on the Scots before their assembly was complete.

Nothing, however, could withstand the ardour of the Cameronians when they attacked; and it is said that they were with difficulty restrained from rushing forward into our own barrage. The Turkish front trenches had been battered to pieces and were quickly cleared with the bayonet, and the whole of Umbrella Hill was in our hands by 11.30. None-the-less the Turks put up a splendid fight in the rear trenches of the redoubt, where they were accounted for by bomb and bayonet. One Scottish lance-corporal killed two men of a machine gun detachment and, single-handed, put the rest to flight.

Then followed a hard period. The shifting sand made consolidation difficult, and every credit is due to the men who carried the necessary stores and material up through the barrage the Turks put down, and to all of those who hung on to the position they had won, despite an intense bombardment, which lasted until 3 a.m. on the morning of 2nd November, at which hour the second phase of the attack by General Hare's Division was due to commence.

In the second phase six tanks took part and, despite the totally unsuitable nature of the ground for their operations, proved most valuable.

The second phase was planned for the 163rd Brigade on the right and the 161st Brigade on the left to take the whole of the Turkish front line trench system from Umbrella Hill (exclusive) to the sea (also exclusive). The third phase was for the two Brigades to push on and take the Turkish second line system on the line Gibraltar–Rafa Trench–Cricket Redoubt. After this was to come the

Digitized by Google

turn of the 162nd Brigade. In a fourth phase the 10th London were to take the whole of the Turkish flanking system as far as Belah Trench and, at the same time, the 11th London were to carry Gun Hill. Then, in the fifth phase, the 5th Bedfords were to take the Turkish position at Sheik Hassan and, with a view to exploiting the success, in a sixth phase one company of the 4th Northamptons was to pass through the 5th Bedfords and take a bite out of the next Turkish position on the Jebalieh line. If all this was successful the Corps Cavalry, comprising one Composite Yeomanry Regiment, was to be passed through the gap thus made to complete the success and threaten the Turkish communications.

The whole of these plans were to be carried out on the night of a full moon and to a time programme. It was felt that the moon would give all the advantages of day with none of its disadvantages, the chief factor being that the enemy artillery would be more or less blind.

The various phases were to be supported by the whole of the artillery of the three divisions, plus the Corps Medium Batteries and some Army artillery. In addition to this, the guns of certain ships were to co-operate from the sea by shelling the enemy's back areas. There were also the tanks, already mentioned, and these had a tremendous programme. They started in the second phase, and two of them in particular, after performing in the second, third and fourth phases, had to come on to support the Bedfords in the fifth phase and after that lead the Company of the 4th Northamptons into the Jebalieh position.

We must now hark back for a moment to see how the 5th Bedfords prepared for their particular part of the show.

During the time that the 54th Division was out of the line prior to the attack every one was hard at it, working out plans; and every one was rehearsed in his particular *rôle*. Having got the Divisional plan, Brigadier-General Mudge, commanding the 162nd Brigade, assembled his Battalion Commanders and with them went very closely into the part to be played by each battalion in the attack.

Digitized by Google

After this the Battalion Commanders thought out their own plans. Lieut.-Colonel Brighten went up to the front line and spent many hours with his field glasses reconnoitring the ground and even crawled out to a little hill in No Man's Land, whence he thought that he might obtain a clearer and better view. But from no point of vantage that he could find could he see anything more than a line of cactus on some sand hills 3,000 yards away. Much of the ground in between was hidden from his view. He felt that there were two difficulties to be overcome, two main problems to solve. First, how to get his battalion up to and pass it through the troops of the previous phases; and, second, how to attack a position 3,000 yards away when one had neither seen it, nor the ground over which it would have to be approached.

The ground being invisible, the next resource was found in the air photographs. A composite plate of these made up to form a complete map is reproduced as Plate XVI.

The photographs produced by the R.A.F. were pretty good, and from them Lieut.-Colonel Brighten found that the whole of the position in which he was particularly interested was covered with cactus or other vegetation. He anticipated, also, that there might be more works than were apparent at first sight. Roughly, it appeared that the enemy's first line was along the tracing of cactus visible from the British lines and that his second line followed the direction of the road. There was a big trench running back, which followed the trace of a well-marked ridge of sand. It was not, of course, possible to decide from the air photographs whether this particular work had been sited against attack from the sea or was to be used as a communication trench. There was evidence of other works and dug-outs and it was obvious that if the whole position was to be held by the Turks the Bedfords would be up against a pretty tough opposition.

Having completely exhausted the resources of the air photographs, the Commanding Officer ordered the Battalion Scout Officer to prepare a large scale model in mud of the

Digitized by Google

position as it might be imagined to be from what the air photographs revealed. He then turned his mind to thinking out ways and means of arriving at a better understanding of the task awaiting his Battalion.

The possibilities of a personal air reconnaissance were next considered, but the Commanding Officer felt that, even if he avoided being sick, he would observe very little more than had been disclosed already by photos furnished by the R.A.F. Another solution presented itself with the thought that a good deal could be seen by going up the beach one night. But a brief, preliminary examination up as far as Sea Post revealed the fact that the enemy's wire ran right down into the water and was kept under close observation all the time.

Then came the really bright notion of a reconnaissance from the sea, but there were all sorts of obstacles to the putting of this plan into action. After a good deal of trouble, however, the General Staff of the 54th Division obtained permission for a drifter to steam up the coast, with Lieut.-Colonel Brighten as a passenger. Once aboard, all seemed well, but the difficulties were not all done with, for there were stringent regulations against ships going in under gun-fire; and, from a distance that was out of range of the Turkish guns, it was impossible to gather any clear impression of the country.

The skipper, however, was nothing if he was not a sportsman, and needed very little persuading to go in until he did get shot at. Thus the drifter steamed right up past Sheik Hassan, not a mile out from the shore, and, as the light was behind them, the Commanding Officer was able to pick up his landmarks and to see more of the ground than he hoped would be possible before the time came for the Battalion to advance across it.

There was, however, not a soul to be seen anywhere, and all the Turks in the world seemed to be asleep, but suddenly a distant " boom " was heard, and, before ever the shell arrived, the crew knew that it had been despatched to their address and the drifter went zig-zagging

Digitized by Google

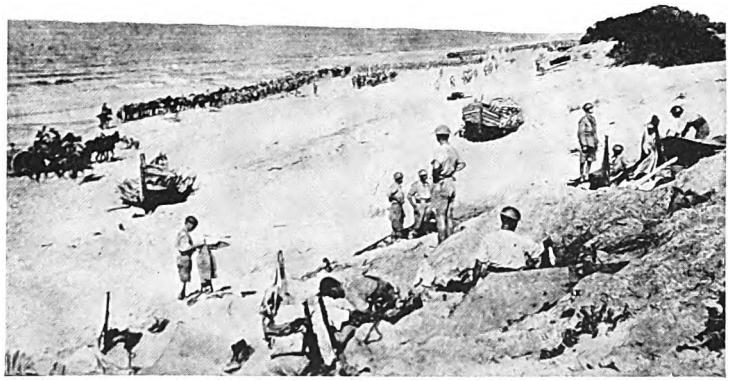
out to sea again. A score or so more shells followed in quick succession and, so good was the shooting of the Turkish gunners, the people on deck were splashed with the salt water thrown up as the shells exploded and the air was full of flying fragments.

The information gained on that expedition led to the adding of many invaluable landmarks to the mud model made by the Scout Officer, and shortly afterwards the Battalion began to practise the plan of attack which had been evolved. Every man in the Battalion was told the whole plan, down to the smallest detail, and the model was placed in the middle of the bivouac, where it could be studied at all times ; and many were the heated discussions that went on around it. The psychological effect, too, was interesting. The men were flattered at being taken into the Commanding Officer's confidence, they thoroughly approved of the plan, and made up their minds to see that it should be carried out to the very best of their ability.

Meantime, Brigade Staff was at work on a similar job, and a full size model of the area over which the Brigade was to attack was laid out on the most suitable ground that could be found for the purpose, and so the whole Brigade were able to execute combined practices. But, even so, those practices called for the exercise of a good deal of imagination, since hill features were invariably wrong and supposed positions of the trenches marked only with a single line of sandbags.

During one of the Brigade practices the Brigadier expressed a certain amount of uneasiness about the attack planned by the 5th Bedfords, which he felt would be lacking in weight. As the outcome, a company of the 4th Northamptons was added to the 5th Bedfords, as Battalion reserve, and at once moved into the Bedfords' bivouac, so that the men might get to know one another better. A Section of Machine Guns and a Sub-section of Trench Mortars, which were to operate with the Battalion, was attached at the same time as the Northamptons. All of which went a long way to help the co-operative spirit.

Digitized by Google



1

2

PL. XVII.] PALESTINE, 1917. [*N* 194

THIRD BATTLE OF GAZA.

1. The Battalion at Sheikh Hassan Beach. 2. A Turkish machine-gun team knocked out during the advance of the 5th Bedfords.

Digitized by Google

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R L

Digitized by Google

Every one knew that this was *the* real big show that was coming on ; liaison work was regarded as being of the first importance and a lot of it went on between the Battalion, the officers of two destroyers, the officers of Close Reconnaissance aeroplanes, of tanks and of the artillery. Finally, the Battalion gave a big dinner one night, to which all these various co-operating officers were invited. It was a howling success, so much so in fact that exalted officers the next morning stated that they had never known the jackals to be so troublesome before.

The Barrage Tables were circulated and after they had been closely checked, to see if they fitted in with the infantry timings, the Commanding Officer paid a visit to the Royal Artillery Commanding Officer, who took a lot of convincing that, if things remained as they had been planned, the protective barrage, instead of protecting, would come smack down on to the Bedfords' first line of consolidation. The C.R.A. was rather of the opinion that they would in any case never reach their objective, but Lieut.-Colonel Brighten held other views and, with the backing of the Brigadier, he obtained a promise that the barrage should be put further back.

On the evening of 31st October, that is to say some four-and-twenty hours before the attack was due to take place, the Battalion moved up to Marine View, marching through the sand dunes close to the sea, to the accompaniment of a deafening roar of guns, when they reached the position of the Field Batteries ; for the six days' bombardment was then just about reaching its zenith. There was very little cover to be found, except such as was afforded by holes scooped out in the sand ; but, fortunately, our guns were giving the Turks such a bad time that they could not attempt much in the way of return fire, and what they did send over was directed further back at our Medium Batteries.

In the soft glow of bright moonlight the Battalion settled down to its supper, the officers' mess being ranged round S.A.A. boxes. Bridge was played afterwards and it was a case of cash down that evening.

O

Digitized by Google

The next morning there was a bathing parade, and the rest of the day was spent in putting the finishing touches to kit and equipment, in preparation for the forthcoming night's work. Every one turned in early and most people managed to snatch a few hours' sleep before midnight, at which hour the whole Battalion had a jolly good hot meal.

This last bivouac lay some four thousand yards in rear of the Position of Deployment and Starting Line, which had been fixed just north of Cricket Redoubt. There had been particular difficulties about fixing the Starting Line, because it was clearly impossible to mark one out behind the enemy's trenches, and to do it in No Man's Land, or behind our own trenches, would have involved passing through the troops of three phases. There were altogether too many loopholes for failure; and, anyway, the Commanding Officer did not want his fellows mixed up in a dog-fight before they got started. In addition to this, it was only reasonable to suppose that, by the time they came on the scene, the Turks would be putting down some "stuff" on our front and his own.

For these reasons the decision was taken to march up the beach in column of route as far as Sea Post. This plan had many advantages. The cliffs afforded both cover and protection most of the way, and there was no chance of the Turks having any batteries in a position to set up an enfilade fire, for it was known that they were too frightened of the naval guns to come very close to the shore.

The final arrangements, then, were made under cover and at one o'clock in the morning the Battalion marched off from Marine View determined to reach Sheik Hassan at the appointed hour of 5 a.m.

Just before they moved off a message came in from Intelligence and the Commanding Officer was able to cheer the men's spirits with the welcome news that Umbrella Hill had been successfully assaulted and that the fighting, which, by that time, had become general all along the Turkish front line, was going well in our favour. In these

Digitized by Google

circumstances the Battalion pushed off along the beach in the very finest fettle. The Battalion Scouts were in front and on the top of the cliffs, then came the Commanding Officer with his Adjutant and horse-holder. As a matter of economy of energy all Company Commanders, also, were mounted at this early stage of the advance. Behind the Commanding Officer and the Adjutant came the Regimental Sergeant Major with echelon of Battalion Headquarters, Police and Pioneers. The Battalion Signallers had gone on already to Brigade Battle Headquarters at Sheik Ajlin, to start getting forward the Brigade artery to Sea Post. This job had been given to the Bedfords as the Brigade Signal Section had their hands quite full enough.

As a further measure of economy in force the regimental transport followed the Battalion Headquarters Section. This saved the men from carrying more weight than was necessary over the heavy sand. Each Company had two limbered G.S. wagons, in which were packed an extra fifty rounds of S.A.A. and two grenades per man, Verey pistols and cartridges, rifle grenade dischargers, entrenching tools, and all the other odds and ends wherewith the modern infantryman has to encumber himself when he fights. There was no fear of anything going wrong, through this consideration for the men's comfort and well-being, since special drill for rapidly unloading the limbered wagons had been practised for weeks beforehand, so that every one knew his job and was perfect at it. The Lewis guns were carried on pack-mules with the Companies, and, last but not least, there were dechies of rum and milk.

In rear of the transport marched the Companies, Left Company leading, then Right, and then Centre (Reserve) Company, Machine Gun Section and Trench Mortar Subsection, with their own transport and carrying parties in rear, and, last of all, the Stretcher-bearer Section, under the Regimental Medical Officer, Capt. R. H. Pryor.

The Battalion was rather short of officers, for the Second-in-Command had to be left out of the action, and there were but three officers per Company.

Digitized by Google

The Brigadier greeted the Commanding Officer at Sheik Ajlin with the news that the whole of the enemy front line had been captured, but said that " the rest of the situation was somewhat obscure." And any experienced soldier could tell what that meant.

By this time there was a lot of " stuff " flying about, but the cliffs afforded perfect protection to the Battalion at Sea Post, where the report centre had been established, connected up by telephone and tucked snugly away up in the cliffs. The other echelons of Battalion Headquarters joined them and the limbered wagons, according to plan, spaced themselves out along the beach. The Companies moved up, filed past their own wagons and picked up their man-loads.

The Battalion Scouts then handed over to the Left Company the responsibility of protection. Meanwhile, the Stretcher-bearer Section had opened a Regimental Aid Post close to Battalion Headquarters. The unloading of the wagons had gone off without a hitch, every one had received a tot of rum and milk, and the transport had gone back under the Transport Officer, with the pack mules, to pick up S.A.A.

As the Companies moved off again they passed the Commanding Officer, where he stood on the parapet of an old Turkish trench. " This is the Turkish front line—we've got it and everything is going splendidly," was what he told the men. It was not quite what the Brigadier had told him at Sheik Ajlin, but it was all that he was going to tell the Battalion at that stage of the proceedings.

All this time there was a lot of shell-fire, but there were no casualties as yet, for the Battalion was still well under cover.

What the Commanding Officer had not told the Battalion was that he had a very shrewd suspicion that something had gone wrong in the previous phases of the battle. In addition to the hint that the Brigadier had let drop in his statement that " the rest of the situation was somewhat obscure," Lieut.-Colonel Brighten had spoken to a young officer of the Essex Regiment, in Sea Post, but had not learned anything useful from him, as to how the 161st

Digitized by Google

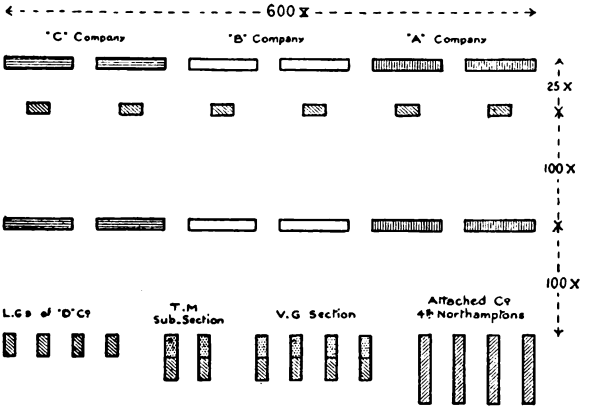
Brigade was faring; he had been in touch also with the 11th Londons, who had gone on for their attack on Gun Hill, and he had seen small parties of their men about and judged that they were not clearing the ground ahead as they had been meant to do.

This was a serious matter. The intention had been that the Bedfords, in the absence of a better starting line, should feel their way out along the communication trench from Sea Post to Cricket Redoubt; and, when they had got their proper intervals, should turn north and deploy into attack formation. The whole Battalion was then to advance, until its right rested on Gun Hill, and its left on the sea.

If this was done then the Battalion would have to pass through the 11th Londons, who, by that time, should be in Gun Hill. After that they would pick up the creeping barrage, which was to be supplied by three 18-pounder batteries, supplying a support of one gun to every thirty-five yards of front, while two batteries of 4.5 inch howitzers were to add depth to a barrage which, certainly, was likely to be lacking in thickness, and there was to be the additional aid of a couple of tanks.

The formation for the attack was as shown below :—

DIAGRAM OF BATTALION ATTACK FORMATION
As used in Third Battle of Gaza, November 1917



Digitized by Google

The first line comprised the leading platoons for the first and second objectives and was followed by the Moppers-Up for the first objective. A hundred yards behind the Moppers-Up marched the rear platoons for the third objective, and, a hundred yards behind them again, came next the Reserves, comprising the attached company 4th Northants, Vickers and Lewis guns and trench mortar sub-section.

By the time the Battalion was in position for deployment, fighting could be heard going on quite close at hand, and it seemed to be mainly centred in Cricket Redoubt, and if it was there it was realised that that might well account for the 11th Londons being held up. A few minutes later the Battalion came under a hot fire from the direction of Rafa Trench and Yunis Redoubt, but suffered no casualties.

What followed was extraordinarily creditable to the Company and Platoon Commanders, for the deployment was carried out without a hitch. In the " before battle " practices every single man had been imbued with the spirit that, no matter what might happen elsewhere, they must catch up their own barrage at Gun Hill, and they must get into Sheik Hassan at any cost. There was to be no stopping for anything. Wherefore, the Commanding Officer caught his Company Commanders in turn, as they went by, gave them a rough appreciation of what he made of the situation, and warned them that they might have to avoid the vicinity of Cricket Redoubt, and might even find Tomb Spur and Gun Hill still in the hands of the enemy.

It was a night of bright moonlight, but, even in broadest daylight, the deployment would have been difficult, and yet it was carried out without fuss and without hesitation.

The Battalion soon became mixed up with the 11th Londons, who were meeting with stubborn resistance everywhere up the communication trenches leading back to Gun Hill; but the officers and N.C.O.'s of the 5th Bedfords held their men together splendidly, and, in little

Digitized by Google

columns, keeping clear of the trenches, they managed to avoid getting involved in a fight at this stage.

At Tomb Spur a very heavy machine gun fire, from Rafa–Belah Ridge, was encountered; but still there were no casualties. The Bedfords were clean through the Londons by this time, but, as had been anticipated, Tomb Spur was still held by the Turks. That was where the Battalion reaped the benefit of close adherence to its time-table, for just as things were beginning to look awkward our barrage whipped down on to the Turkish position. The trenches were rushed, our first wave going clean through with dripping bayonets, but the second wave found themselves let in for a lot of mopping up, which caused the third wave intense annoyance, and it is on record that one wag shouted, in a voice not untinged with anger: "Why the hell are you messing up your bayonets before you get to Sheik Hassan?"

The keenness of the Bedfords in that fight was nothing short of remarkable. In fact, so eager were they to get at the enemy, that they caught up the back fringes of the barrage, and it is to be feared that some of them ran right into it and paid the price accordingly. But, luckily, the barrage was so thin that only a few casualties were suffered. On the other hand, the men's eagerness brought its own reward, for they were right into the enemy position, even before the barrage had lifted beyond it, and well before the Turks began to get their heads up again. This was a lucky circumstance and undoubtedly saved many casualties, for the Turkish strength numbered at least a couple of battalions in those trenches, to say nothing of eight machine guns.

It will be remembered that Advanced Brigade Signal Centre was picked up at Sea Post. From thence onwards the Battalion had extended the artery right up the beach to Sheik Hassan. This work was carried out by two parties. The forward one with the Battalion Scout Officer, Lieut. Damon, the Scout Sergeant, Sergeant Burgess, M.M., and six scouts formed the escort, and the requisite signals

Digitized by Google

personnel was supplied by the Regimental Signallers, who laid the cable forward, moving right up with the front line of the Left Company. They also dropped relay posts at every 500 yards. There were three lightly equipped men in each of these posts.

On arrival at Tomb Spur the Battalion Scout Officer reported progress, and, as soon as possible, the Battalion Report Centre moved up and took over. Then Sea Post was closed down, so far as the Battalion was concerned, and the same procedure was repeated into Sheik Hassan. In this way the Battalion was kept in constant touch with Brigade, and, meanwhile, Lieut. Damon and his observers performed yeoman service in keeping the Commanding Officer informed as to what was going on in front.

By the time Battalion Headquarters reached Tomb Spur it was light enough to make good use of field glasses, and Lieut.-Colonel Brighten was able to watch the assault carried out by his first line. The way they did their job convinced him that all was well, and he moved up at the double together with the Adjutant, Capt. Wilkin, and two picked scouts, Privates Wilkinson and Turner. They arrived at the place previously selected from air photographs for Battalion Headquarters, and the forward attack was just opening up as the Commanding Officer and his companions slipped into the trench at the top of the sand hill, where they witnessed most of the fighting.

As soon as the rear signal party came up a special line was run right forward to the Sheik's Tomb, and an observation post opened there by the Battalion Scouts, while all Companies were connected up by cable with Battalion Headquarters.

Meanwhile the attack on Sheik Hassan was carried out absolutely to programme, and by 6 a.m. on the morning of 2nd November, Hassan Garden was cleared right through and consolidated from the south-west corner of Hassan Pimple to Sheik Hassan (see air photo map Plate XVI). Thirteen Turkish officers and 140 other ranks were taken prisoners and sent back; a number of Turks

Digitized by Google

1

2

3

4

PL. XVIII.] PALESTINE, 1917. [*O* 202

THIRD BATTLE OF GAZA.

1. The Tomb of Sheikh Nebban. 2. Company for the Sheikh. 3. The Orderly Room Staff, 5th Bedfords. 4. The Q.M.'s burrow.

Digitized by Google

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

Digitized by Google

were killed, and twenty bodies actually counted. This was not by any means the full tally of the slain, but the locality captured was too big for a proper search to be undertaken. Seven machine guns were taken and the fragments of an eighth seen. Among the other spoils were over 200 rifles, many thousand rounds of S.A.A., a dump of 77mm. shells, R.E. material, bombs, quartermaster's stores and papers of military value ; but, owing to the need for consolidation, proper salvage operations had to wait for awhile.

During the assault 2nd-Lieut. E. A. Phillips, 2nd Berkshire Regt., attached 5th Bedfords, led one platoon of A Company with a good deal more dash than regard for his orders and entered Turtle Hill. The Turks raised the white flag, but a machine gun in rear opened on the platoon, and 2nd-Lieut. Phillips was killed and pretty nearly the whole of his platoon was wiped out.

While the men were advancing through Hassan Garden they unfortunately suffered a good many casualties from our own barrage, but it was never satisfactorily cleared up as to whether they suffered through their own over-eagerness, which may have led them forward into the bursting shells, or whether the shooting of the artillery was erratic. But, be that as it may, it was in Hassan Garden and from the fire of their own covering artillery that the 5th Bedfords suffered a great many of their casualties in the Third Battle of Gaza. Further than that, the subsequent artillery barrage did not lift off Hassan Pimple and Sheik Hassan according to time-table and further casualties occurred there before anything could be done to stop them.

Finally, the tanks were not on time, and eventually only No. 5 arrived at 6.25 a.m. It then off-loaded its R.E. material and proceeded forward, only to break down before it had gone any great distance.

From a quarter past six to half past eight the Turks shelled the Bedfords very heavily with 5.9's, 4.2's and one 77mm. gun in the position they were holding. About this time, too, efforts were made to support the attack of

Digitized by Google

the 1/4th Northamptons on the Lion and Tiger trenches; but, owing to smoke and mist, visibility was very bad, and during the morning our line suffered a good deal from machine gun and rifle fire from Tortoise Hill.

At half past two in the afternoon the 1/4th Northamptons were ordered to attack Tortoise Hill and Belah, on which the assault of the 1/10th Londons had proved abortive. They did so very gallantly, but were driven back, and thus the 5th Bedfords in Sheik Hassan found themselves somewhat in the air. The whole locality was submitted to a heavy bombardment again that afternoon, and a very strong enemy counter-attack was developed between Tortoise Hill and Turtle Hill, which also was accounted for satisfactorily.

It was in the course of this counter-attack that R.S.M. Milton had a narrow escape from a 5.9 inch shell, which burst almost on top of him. The heavy sand, however, blanketed the effect of the explosion, and he escaped with nothing worse than a flesh wound in the forearm. The miraculous nature of his escape will be realised when it is stated that the force of the explosion, partly smothered though it was, ripped his equipment clean off him. Although his arm was badly hurt he refused to become a casualty, and went on with his duty with his arm in a sling, an act of fortitude that set an excellent example to the rest of the Battalion.

As soon as the Turkish counter-attack was launched the Bedfords reinforced their right flank, but still the enemy came on, and as it was found that all communications had been cut the S.O.S. signal was fired, and in response the artillery barrage whipped down, catching the Turks in the open, and this, combined with the volume of machine gun and rifle fire from the position they were trying to retake, drove them back in some disorder.

Coincident with the counter-attack came word that the Turks were advancing from Tiger Trench, but the Navy had spotted the move and turned on a heavy fire that soon checked this fresh advance.

Digitized by Google

During the evening the remaining Northamptons and one Company of the 1/11th Londons were placed under Lieut.-Colonel Brighten's orders. The force under his command was now distributed as to a strong point held by the Northamptons, while three Companies of the 1/5th Bedfords, each strengthened by one platoon from the 1/11th London company attached, were distributed in two lines from Beach Road–Hassan Pimple to Sheik Hassan (see aerial map, Plate XVI). No attempt was made to entrench a continuous line, but platoons were distributed checker-wise, supporting each other, and four machine guns and four Stokes guns were placed in the second line near the road. This arrangement looked well, although the enemy shelled the formation continuously. At first the casualties were few but the position was under observation from Turtle Hill and soon the shells began to take their toll.

During the night of the 2nd–3rd November a party of Royal Engineers were at work on the strong point, and they also put in a pump to a well at the north end of Beach Road, which yielded a good supply of water. The men were very tired. The long advance over the sand carrying heavy loads, the stiff fight and the almost total lack of sleep took a lot out of them. They were, moreover, without blankets, and the bivouac sheets gave but little protection. But, still, the *morale* of the Battalion was excellent all round, as it needed to be on account of the heavy shell-fire to which they were subjected.

Despite the general weariness, patrols went out to Turtle Hill, where they found the enemy consolidating, and to Lion and Tiger trenches, where the Turks were likewise engaged. The Bedfords also established O.P.'s at Sheik's Tomb and " Alfred."

From the 3rd to the 6th they were constantly under shell-fire and almost as constantly out on various patrols, leading up to the subsequent attack upon Turtle Hill.

Now let us see how the Third Battle of Gaza had progressed in its entirety.

At 3 a.m. on 2nd November, the main attack had been

Digitized by Google

launched, and by 6.30 a.m. Sheik Hassan, its furthest objective, was in our hands. The capture of this position by the 5th Bedfords has been already dealt with. In almost every other sector the victorious British infantry were equally successful. The casualties were, however, abnormally heavy in one place where the Turks had laid land mines that exploded by contact, destroying the leading wave of one battalion, while, in the centre, the 163rd Brigade had a desperate hand-to-hand fight in the rear trenches of the Turkish position.

The main attack was brilliantly planned and most bravely carried out. It achieved its purpose of pinning down the Gaza garrison and compelling its reinforcement by a division from the Turkish reserve, largely because the capture of Sheik Hassan had turned the flank of practically the whole of the Turkish prepared works and placed the 54th Division in a situation to menace the entire Turkish position.

The attack and bombardment must have inflicted terrible losses upon the enemy, for a thousand Turks were afterwards buried on the field, and 650 prisoners, three guns and thirty machine guns were captured. In that main attack phase of the battle the 21st Army Corps lost some 350 men killed, a like number were missing, and there were some 2,000 wounded.

On the right flank General Chetwode, after a careful study of the ground, prior to his attack towards Sheria, pushed out the 53rd Division with the Camel Brigade on its right against Towal Abu Jerwal, some six miles north of Beersheba, while the Anzac Mounted Division of the Desert Mounted Corps advanced steadily north between the Hebron Road and Towal Abu Jerwal. The Australian Mounted Division he held in reserve, and the Yeomanry Division remained at Shellal watching the centre. Meanwhile, Colonel Newcombe with a party of under a hundred men was out raiding north of El Dhaheriye, on the Hebron Road, astride which they established themselves just south of Hebron.

Digitized by Google

These circumstances combined seem to have led the Turkish Staff to apprehend a wide enveloping movement north of Beersheba, or a big cavalry raid up the road to Jerusalem. This belief enforced the disposition of Turkish troops in such a manner that a big fight was brought on for the dominating height, ten miles north of Beersheba, known as Tel el Khuweilfeh, which gave good observation over all the surrounding country and held the best water supplies, but a hard day's fighting on 2nd November found the opposing troops in a state of stalemate.

Meanwhile, water was the urgent problem that beset the Commanders of the 20th Corps and the Desert Mounted Corps. The hoped for supplies north of Beersheba had proved disappointing; and, to make matters worse, it was impossible to resort to short rations, since a peculiarly hot and persistent *khamsin* was blowing from the desert, storms of dust accompanying the scorching wind and increasing the thirst of man and beast a hundredfold.

On 4th and 5th November bitter, disjointed fighting went on around Tel el Khuweilfeh, and a concerted attack upon that position by the British was organised for the morning of the 6th. By the evening of the 7th a sullen enemy had yielded up the height to the spent but triumphant 158th Brigade of the 53rd Division and the 3rd Battalion of the Camel Brigade. The 60th Division had carried the great mound of Sheria, and the 10th Division the strong Hareira Redoubt. But on the far left, dawn had not broken in the sky on the morning of 7th November before the 21st Army Corps was sweeping forward almost unopposed across the formidable barrier that had so long barred the British way into the Promised Land. The all-important Ali Muntah Ridge had been occupied on the night of the 6th–7th, thus placing the key of the Turkish defences in our hands. Gaza was evacuated and the Turkish Army was in full retreat.

In this final phase of the Third Battle of Gaza the 5th Bedfords again played their part, for at 1 a.m. on the morning of 7th November, C Company attacked and carried

Digitized by Google

Turtle Hill, which the Turks had been reinforcing and strengthening for best part of a week.

Then they heard that Gaza was reported unoccupied and that the enemy was everywhere retiring. Confirmation came when the Divisional Cavalry rode through Sheik Hassan in pursuit of the departing foe. Later on, the 52nd Division followed the cavalry, and, meantime, the Bedfords were counting up their booty. This included half a million rounds of S.A.A., 2,000 bombs and eight machine guns.

At six o'clock that night the Battalion marched to Jebalieh by the beach road. A, B, and D Companies took up an outpost line and came under an intensive enemy machine gun fire. The next day A Company captured two 4.2 inch guns, manufactured by Armstrong Whitworth in 1897. These guns the reader may see for himself, since one now stands in Wardown Park, Luton, and the other adorns the Embankment at Bedford.

The end of this third, and greatest, Battle of Gaza, found the Battalion, as part of the 54th Division, occupying the defences of Gaza itself.

Their order of battle for the great fight was as follows :—

HEADQUARTERS

C.O. : Lieut.-Col. Edgar Brighten, C.M.G., D.S.O.
Adjutant : Capt. Wilkin.
Regt. Medical Officer : Capt. R. H. Pryor.
Quartermaster : Lieut. Fuller.
Regt.-Sergt.-Major : R.S.M. Milton.

A. Company.
Lieut. A. J. Mander.

B. Company.
Captain J. T. Yarde.

C. Company.
Lieut. Cronin.

D. Company.
Lieut. W. A. Shaw.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Into the Holy Land

Zeify Hill—Yaffa Hill—The Fall of Jerusalem

As has been seen 7th and 8th November were the critical days following the Third Battle of Gaza. The Gaza-Beersheba line had been broken at last, and General Allenby's plan was to employ his cavalry, not in attacking the tail of the Turkish retreat, where the sting lay, but in throwing in his horsemen from the flanks to cut off as many of the vanquished forces as possible, thus isolating them for the following up British infantry to deal with. By the evening of the 8th, however, the cavalry had failed to intercept any material portion of the Turkish Army.

Among the principal reasons for this failure must be reckoned the fact that men and horses were much fatigued by hard marching and stiff fighting on short rations of water, nor must the fact be forgotten that only two of the six Cavalry Brigades available for the purpose of pursuit were armed with the sabre.

The difficulty of the water question, so far as the mounted troops were concerned, cannot be over emphasised, for on the night of the 8th–9th only one Division succeeded in watering their horses and was, therefore, ready to advance on the morning of the 9th.

During the next two days the Desert Mounted Corps, the 20th Corps, and the 52nd and 75th Divisions of the 21st Corps moved forward for the purpose of turning the right flank of the enemy's position, which ran almost due north

Digitized by Google

and south. The leading Brigade of the 21st Corps came in for some severe fighting in front of Esdud on the 10th, but at that time the 54th Division and the Imperial Service Brigade of the 21st Corps still remained at Gaza.

The pursuit up the plain of Philistia occupied ten days from the date of the Third Battle of Gaza, and terminated in the occupation of Jaffa. The Eighth Turkish Army withdrew behind the River Auja, and the Seventh Turkish Army was driven into the Judean Mountains. The pursuit was made glorious by a number of brilliant cavalry charges in which the Warwickshire, Worcestershire, Buckinghamshire, and Berkshire Yeomanry all took part.

The advance to Ramleh and Jaffa had separated the two Turkish Armies and added many difficulties to their supply problems. This circumstance determined General Allenby to make a bold stroke for Jerusalem at once. It needed a bold commander to frame the plans which were ultimately put into operation. History made plain the fate of the Assyrian, Roman and Crusader Forces that had flung themselves against the strong natural western defences of Judea, and the War Cabinet had cabled a warning to General Allenby against involving his army in actions beyond its strength. None the less, he appreciated the demoralised state of his enemies, and decided to strike. On 18th November operations were resumed, which were to continue until the beginning of December.

The Anzac and 54th Divisions had now come up from Gaza, and were to take up a defensive line in the plain covering the main communications, while the remainder of the 21st Corps was to advance into the hills. The 75th Division was to get astride the main Jaffa-Jerusalem Road and advance through a defile a few miles east of Latron. The 52nd Division and Yeomanry Division were destined for Joshua's old battle ground in the Valley of Ajalon. And from this general situation evolved the position in advance of Ludd looking across to the Wadi Malake, which the Bedfords were to occupy.

One might here pause to remark that the troops of the

Digitized by Google

75th Division detailed to undertake four miles of steep climbing to the villages of Saris and Kuryet el Enab on the ridge overlooking the Jaffa-Jerusalem Road were peculiarly well chosen for their task, since they comprised a battalion of Gurkhas and other Indian troops well accustomed to similar circumstances of warfare on the North-West Frontier of India.

At this time, just after the middle of November, the troops of all nations, whether white, black or brown, suffered severely from the cold and wet, for, although the winter had set in, they were still in thin, khaki drill, without great coats, and with but few blankets.

In the last chapter we left the Bedfords at Jebalieh on 8th November. Packs were got up from Sheik Hassan two days later, and on the 12th the Battalion moved into bivouac on the cliffs near the sea. At this time they were given a good deal of close order drill to smarten them up after action. On the 14th, however, they were on the move again and proceeded by march route to Herbien. From there they tramped on with the Brigade group, passing through Esdud on the 16th, where a sharp fight had taken place a week earlier. On the 19th they reached Ludd by mid-morning, where A, B and C Companies took up outposts. That night was one of great misery on account of the very heavy rain.

The next afternoon, 20th November, the Battalion was lying in advance of Ludd with A, B and C Companies preparing a position covered by the cavalry, who were still in advance. Urgent orders were received to relieve the Yeomanry in the neighbourhood of the village of Beit Nabala. It was too late to get the whole Battalion concentrated before nightfall, wherefore D Company, under Captain F. B. Hobbs, who were then in reserve, were rushed up and succeeded in taking over from the Yeomanry before the darkness shut down.

In the meantime the other three Companies were concentrated and moved up to the village of Haditheh, where they lay in close support during the night. At

Digitized by Google

dawn the next morning a reconnaissance was made, a position in the hills on a somewhat extended front of about 5,000 yards was chosen, and the whole Battalion moved in and began to put the place into a state of defence. At this time the line on the British left flank was very thin, as all available troops were concentrated on the right flank of the Army for the capture of Jerusalem. The portion of the front at Ludd and Jaffa had, therefore, to be held with the minimum of troops, although they were covering our main communications.

No sooner was the Battalion in position than patrols reported that they were in touch with enemy patrols. Almost immediately afterwards stronger bodies of Turks were found to be concentrated in rear. This information inspired the men to complete the defences with all possible speed.

On the 21st B and C Companies took over the position. A Company and Battalion Headquarters moved to a post at Yid, and at that time the 1/10th Londons were on the left and the Yeomanry on the right of the 162nd Brigade line.

The next day passed in comparative quiet, each Company consolidating its positions and making a strong post. The posts were named D Company "Zeify Hill," C Company "Banala Hill," B Company "Pinnacle Hill." These ran from right to left respectively.

During the next few nights there were constant patrol encounters, and from information obtained from prisoners taken, including a Turkish officer of the rank of captain, it was discovered that the Turks were concentrating for an attack upon the position held by the 5th Bedfords.

During the night of the 26th–27th an Arab gave himself up to C Company, with information as to a force of Turks at Shukhah; and soon after 8 o'clock on the morning of the 27th an advanced post of D Company pushed out from Zeify Hill and discovered a column of about 150 Turks advancing down the *wadi* between Zeify Hill and Deir Tureif. The patrol at once opened fire at just under 1,000 yards with Lewis guns and the Turks were seen to scatter

Digitized by Google

with some loss. They then took up a position under cover and a sniping engagement ensued. During the morning the Bedfords established an outpost on Cistern Hill, with two Lewis gun sections, and a section of riflemen. They were not left long undisturbed, for early in the afternoon a Turkish battalion with its transport was seen to be advancing on Cistern Hill. They were at once engaged and at dusk occupied Cistern Hill, from which the Bedfords withdrew when the enemy had advanced to within 300 yards of their position.

Throughout the 28th the enemy made repeated attempts to renew his advance, but each was frustrated by the volume and accuracy of our fire.

The whole of the next day Zeify Hill was intermittently shelled by the Turks with 4.2's and mountain guns. By this time, however, D Company had secured ample cover and only one casualty was sustained. In the afternoon the enemy infantry showed a marked disposition to gain ground by an advance on Deir Tureif, but machine and Lewis gun fire was brought to bear from Zeify Hill and, finally, the attack was nipped in the bud at 900 yards' range from the 10th Londons' position. Dusk fell with the complete cessation of fire by the enemy. At 6 p.m., however, the Turks, having concentrated under cover of a short bombardment, launched an attack some 200 strong against the post on Zeify Hill from the north-east. The main attack was preceded by a bombing party of about a dozen men armed with hand and rifle grenades. They took full advantage of the cover afforded by the rocky and broken ground, and succeeded in rushing D Company's machine gun emplacement after smothering the garrison with bombs. The machine gun crew acted with great gallantry and fought the enemy at close range with their revolvers, but weight of numbers bore them down, while the fact that the enemy took cover under and used our stone parapet against us prevented the Lewis guns on the flanks from getting at them. One of our posts on the flank was immediately led by its commander, Captain F. B. Hobbs, and counter-

Digitized by Google

attacked inwards, driving out the enemy, who had obtained a footing in the trench. All Lewis guns in the neighbourhood moved of their own accord to bring fire to bear upon the enemy, who had by that time established himself in considerable force behind the barricade afforded him by our parapet.

The first notification of this attack received at Battalion Headquarters was when a shower of bullets from Zeify Hill began to fall about the Headquarters position. Then came a disjointed telephone message, interrupted by the wire being cut in the middle of it. Shortly after this a runner, badly wounded about the head, came stumbling into Battalion Headquarters with a somewhat alarming report; but things were not by any means as bad as the Commanding Officer had at first been led to believe. D Company Commander, Captain F. B. Hobbs, had grasped the situation and immediately with his subaltern, 2nd-Lieut. J. E. Waterton, led his supports, who were lying on the reverse slope, over the top of the hill and charged the enemy with the bayonet. A rough-and-tumble ensued, in which the Turks used bombs freely, but the bayonets of the Bedfords proved too much for them, and they finally broke and fled. Captain Hobbs then learned that 2nd-Lieut. Waterton had been killed while gallantly leading his platoon and that a machine gun was missing. Thereupon he took out a strong patrol himself. They came upon the Turks reorganising for a further attack and found the missing machine gun in charge of two Austrian N.C.O.'s, who were getting it into action against us. These men were dressed in gunner uniform and one of them shouted out: "Don't shoot!" One of our lads interpreted the request to his own liking, and, dashing forward, bayoneted the pair of them and thus recaptured the gun single-handed. The Battalion's casualties in that scrap were one officer and two other ranks killed, and seven other ranks wounded, of whom two were machine gunners.

In connection with this incident, at the time when the Turkish attack was made there was no reserve Company

Digitized by Google

available because it was relieving another Company on the right flank.

The reports received by telephone and runner, together with the shouts in Turkish which could be heard, led the Commanding Officer to think for the moment that the situation was serious. Zeify Hill was an important post, and, behind the Battalion, there was nothing to stop the enemy from penetrating right through to railhead at Ludd, once he was through our front line. Accordingly, an immediate counter-attack by the Headquarters Company was ordered. In other words, that attack was to be delivered by the Headquarters Details, comprising Reserve Signallers, scouts, orderly-room staff, mess servants, cooks and orderlies.

These all fell in hurriedly, as they had practised previously in case of an emergency like this, and, under command of Lieut. R. H. Smith, the Acting Adjutant, ably seconded by R.S.M. Milton, they dashed up the hill, eager to restore the situation. But they were doomed to disappointment, for, as we have seen, Captain Hobbs and his Company had already ejected the enemy themselves.

The disgust of Sergeant-Cook Thurley and his men when they arrived and found there was no fighting for them is said to have been most picturesquely expressed.

The line, however, had been re-established and everything remained quiet for the time being. Meanwhile, the Bedfords buried the bodies of fifty-nine enemies, including the two Austrians, and took three prisoners and thirteen rifles. Numerous other dead bodies could not be collected from in front of the position, nor could their number be properly estimated on account of constant sniping.

At a quarter to five on the morning of the 30th an enemy force, of an estimated strength of about fifty rifles, approached Nabala Hill from the north; and, having crept up amongst the olive trees and under other cover, attacked C Company's position with bombs. The attack did not, however, quite reach the position, and the Turks were driven off with considerable loss to the lower slopes

Digitized by Google

of the hill, where they established themselves in a fresh position.

The Post Commander, Captain E. T. Maier, at once organised a counter-attack by two sections, who moved out under Captain H. W. Cronin.

The counter-attacking party turned the enemy's flank and went for him with the bayonet, but the Turks bolted before our men could get anywhere near them. Unfortunately Captain Cronin was seriously hit while directing the advance of his men, and the next day died of his wounds. In the meantime Lieut.-Colonel Brighten had ordered the 4.5 inch howitzers supporting him to open fire on Olive Hill. This they did and the enemy retired right into that place. The artillery fire was kept up for five minutes and then stopped.

A following-up patrol was sent out to search for enemy casualties and, although none was found, at nine o'clock on the following morning stretcher cases were observed being moved from the rear of Olive Hill towards Shadow Spur.

On 2nd December Headquarters 54th Division issued the following General Order to be circulated to all units comprising the Division :—

" The G.O.C. wishes to convey to the O.C. 1/5th Bedford Regt. his high appreciation of the conduct of that Battalion in the fighting on the night, 29th–30th November. He also wishes O.C. 1/5th Bedford Regt. to be informed that a copy of his report will be circulated throughout the Division as an example of ' *How to do it* ' ! "

At the beginning of December the Battalion was relieved by battalions of the Hampshire and Norfolk Regiments. The 5th Bedfords then moved into the Yehudiyeh section, and relieved the 1/5th Suffolks in the second line at Kefrana. They were soon again in the front line, however, and were in for a perfectly beastly time, with constant heavy rains and a lot of shelling, the latter resulting in numerous casualties.

About this time the Battalion had to turn its hand to many strange tasks. The two villages of Yehudiyeh and

Digitized by Google

Kefrana were very close to the front line and the inhabitants were suffering many casualties from Turkish shell-fire. It was decided, therefore, to clear these villages, and on 7th December orders were received to that effect. One Company was put on to each village to carry out the work, and had a very difficult time. The inhabitants were, of course, loath to leave their homes, and, as no one spoke their language, it was something more than hard to make them understand why they were to leave, what they were to do, or where they were to go.

At the end of a tiring day Captain Hobbs, with D Company, was having a final look round to see that all was clear in the village he had been given to deal with, when he discovered left behind in Yehudiyeh eight babies and three bed-ridden old women! Nothing daunted, however, he rode after the retreating villagers and literally drove back eight women and six men, whom he picked by their appearance of physical fitness. Once he had this party back in the village he presented each of the women with a baby and made the men carry away the three old ladies.

On 19th December the unpleasant monotony of being constantly shelled was broken by the arrival of a draft of two officers and 144 other ranks. The next day the shelling was comparatively slight, but increased considerably on the 21st, when the enemy were observed to be very restless, and our aeroplanes came in for a pretty hot peppering.

Just before midnight B Company, under Captain J. T. Yarde, left our line and assaulted Yaffa Hill without artillery support, the bayonet being the only weapon used. The enemy put up a pretty good fight, but was soon overcome and ultimately the whole garrison bolted. There was a big temptation to pursue them, but orders had been given not to advance beyond a certain point, and so the consolidation of the post was at once commenced.

The Bedfords took that post at small cost, for only four other ranks were killed and one officer and nine other ranks wounded. Throughout the action and consolidation the party sustained a heavy shell-fire, but at dawn on the

Digitized by Google

23rd the men in the observation post reported a general retirement in progress and Turkish guns, transports and troops could be seen moving away northwards along all available routes.

The 24th December, Christmas Eve, 1917, was a very wet day. The work on the new line went forward steadily, but the prospect of Christmas fare looked pretty hopeless. However, the Second-in-Command, Major C. R. James, in his capacity of P.R.I., had sent his corporal and another man right down the line to Port Said. There is some suggestion here of a " wangle," by reason of the significant fact that Lieut. Hunter, of the 5th Bedfords, was R.T.O. at railhead, a position which enabled him to " afford all necessary facilities."

At Port Said the P.R.I.'s corporal purchased live turkeys, together with the ingredients for Christmas puddings, and some " comforts " (nature not specified, but strongly suspected) for the officers. These supplies arrived at railhead in due course, and there Lieut. Hunter provided the means for half cooking them, a necessary precaution, since railhead, at that time, was near Deir Sineid, and some forty miles behind the line.

The Christmas rations were then loaded on to one of the Battalion's limbered wagons which succeeded in getting up to the line on the night of 23rd–24th December, just before the rains broke in earnest.

That very evening the ration camels were unable to get up to the regiment owing to the *wadi* being in spate, and so the Quartermaster, Lieut. Fuller, swam his pony across the *wadi* and arrived with what might have been the cheerless report: " No rations to-night ! " This caused no alarm, however, in the breast of the Bedfords, who had their Christmas dinner safe whatever else might happen, and they, incidentally, were probably the only Battalion in that part of the Eastern theatre of war who enjoyed such genuine Christmas fare that year.

Meantime, Jerusalem had fallen, despite the fact that the Turkish Seventh Army, of an estimated strength of

Digitized by Google

nearly 16,000 rifles, had held strong positions, west of the Holy City, that had been hewn out of the hill side more than a year earlier.

The presence of men we had fought against at Gallipoli and Gaza, had they been in the same fighting fettle, would have made those positions wellnigh impregnable, but the heart was out of the Turk after repeated defeats, and when the main attack of the 53rd and 60th Divisions was delivered at dawn in driving mist and rain on 8th December, it was the difficulties of ground and weather which slowed up the attack rather than any stubborn defence on the part of our enemies. That night the Turks retreated, some fleeing panic-stricken and others tramping sullenly away. By the morning of the 9th there was not a single Turk left in the Holy City, and soon after noon the Mayor of Jerusalem came out and surrendered the keys to Major-General J. S. M. Shea, commanding the 60th (London) Division.

This was a terrible blow to the Turks, for, although Jerusalem was of no special strategical value, the Holy City had remained for 400 years under Ottoman domination, its capture had still the power to stir Christianity, and it was, moreover, the third of the four holy places which had been wrested from Turkey.

The tremendous storm which broke at Christmas was the culmination of a period of very heavy rains, and, although the line was now secure along the whole front, any further advance was out of the question until such time as the communications had been improved. What that period represented to the men who went through it must almost beggar description, for the plain in many parts had become nothing less than a morass; it was absolutely impassable to transport, and, in many places, the railway line was washed out. In short, there was no comfort for anyone either in the bleak hills or on the sodden plain, and yet every one remained cheerful.

New Year's Day, 1918, dawned for the 5th Bedfords with a march to Selmeh in the Mulebbis area, some ten miles north of Ludd. In this sector they stayed until the

Digitized by Google

end of March. Most days they were digging, helping to drain the Jaffa-Selmeh Road, but oftentimes it was too wet even to dig and more often still they were under shell-fire. But still they kept themselves fit and took part in weekly cross-country runs and there were route marches as well, while, on 4th February, the Battalion received orders to furnish a Guard of Honour for his Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught.

The beginning of March was signalised by the Battalion team of fifteen runners carrying off the final of the divisional cross-country championship race, and on the 5th of the month orders were issued for the 5th Bedfords to move to a new area, whither they proceeded *viâ* Wilhelma on the 7th. For several days prior to this move attack practice had been constant, so that it became obvious to every one that the Yellow Devils were shortly to go into action once more.

This was not, however, destined to be the sort of big fight every one had been looking forward to. There was no church parade on Sunday, 10th March, upon which day brigade orders were received for operations to take place two days later, so the Acting Commanding Officer, Adjutant and Company Commanders went out and reconnoitred the ground over which the advance was to be made.

The following day the Battalion paraded at 5.30 a.m., under Major C. R. James, the Commanding Officer being on leave in England, and marched to the point from which the attack was to start, accompanied by the Company limbered wagons, pack animals and S.A.A. limbered wagons. The artillery put over a heavy fire between 6.15 and 7.45 a.m., at which hour the infantry attack commenced. The Bedfords achieved their objectives without opposition and without casualties, but a heavy storm, which came on during the attack, made observation very difficult. Things settled down for the rest of the day, and there was very little shelling during the night. At nine o'clock on the morning of the 9th, the 4th Northamptons and 10th Londons passed

Digitized by Google

through the line held by the Bedfords to resume the attack. The enemy evidently observed this manœuvre, for he put down a slight barrage and one shell bursting near A Company wounded six men.

The Northamptons, however, went through to their objective just as easily as the Bedfords had attained theirs upon the previous day, but the Londons were held up for a time at Mejdel Yaba, but the artillery came to their aid, and the position was carried soon after noon.

Meantime the Bedfords had moved to Kefr Dikerin, where they formed the second line. Blankets and water were brought up by camel transport, but the limbered wagons were unable to reach Battalion Headquarters, owing to the rocky nature of the ground. Whilst this regimental transport was standing out on the open plain an enemy aeroplane flew over and dropped four bombs, which resulted in two mules being killed and three men wounded, while a dump was fired in a *wadi* near Brigade Headquarters.

The formation of the new line supplied the men with no light work, since the ground was far too rocky for the making of entrenchments and defences had, therefore, to be created by the building of sangars.

By the 13th all the troops had settled down in the new sector and patrols were going out regularly and finding all clear.

D Company at this time earned the nickname of the "Salvage Corps," for they recovered over a hundred shells on the 14th, which had probably been left by a Mountain Gun Battery, and again recovered a like number on the following night.

The 16th, although the weather was marred by heavy rain, was an important date in the history of the Bedfords, for it was on that day that H.R.H. The Duke of Connaught at Yazur decorated Captain F. B. Hobbs and Lieut. W. A. Shaw with the M.C., R.S.M. Milton with the M.C. and the D.C.M., C.S.M. Chandler, Sergeants Sapsford and Sharpe and Corporal Ball with the D.C.M., and Sergeant Marlow and Privates Halfpenny and Andrews with the M.M.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

The Coastal Plain of Palestine

The Fall of Jericho—The Bureid Ridge Raid

The opening days of the year 1918 had found the 5th Bedfords bivouacked on the hillside south-west of the Jewish colony of Mulebbis. They remained there only a few days, before moving westward in the direction of Jaffa, and eventually bivouacked near a village called Selmeh, about four miles from the town. Their sojourn in that place was marked by very heavy rainstorms and, no doubt, most of the men in the Battalion still remember the mud which was knee-deep on the Jaffa Road, where they were busily employed draining and improving the highway. The middle of January found them back at Mulebbis, but this time they were to have the very welcome shelter of billets. These billets were very far below the standard of the Battalion's British homes; but, still, they were a great deal better than bivouacs. During the month that the Battalion was in billets at Mulebbis rain fell incessantly and many expressions of thankfulness were heard from the men that they had a roof over their heads.

The Turks did not let the Battalion quite forget them during that period, and a football match was brought to a summary conclusion one afternoon by a number of shells arriving unexpectedly in the middle of the playing field. On another occasion a shell went through the roof of the house where No. 16 Platoon was billeted, but, luckily, without hurting anybody.

About the middle of February the Battalion moved into bivouacs in an almond grove at the back of the Jewish

Digitized by Google

colony. This was a time of great sporting activity, and, although the Battalion won the divisional cross-country race, which was held at Bald Hill, they were unlucky to lose to the 10th Londons at football.

It was during this month that General Smuts, the famous South African soldier, who had done so well in the East African campaign, arrived in Palestine to discuss with General Allenby the War Cabinet's proposals for a further advance. Following upon these deliberations General Allenby made the first step in his new campaign for the occupation of the Jordan Valley, whereby he intended to secure his right flank. The 60th Division was to advance directly on Jericho, while the Anzac Mounted Division, attached to the 20th Corps for the operations, was to enter the Jordan Valley near Nebi Musa, interpose between the enemy and Jericho and turn his left flank.

This new phase of the operations commenced on 19th February, and although the Turks, equipped with plenty of machine guns, were able to hold up the 60th Division and check the flanking movement of the Anzacs, they threw in their hand, withdrew across the Jordan, and by the morning of 21st February we had occupied Jericho.

In order to close the routes into the Jordan Valley to the Turks and to prevent them from assembling troops rapidly against the flank of a raid to Amman on the Hejaz railway, the 20th and 21st Corps, containing the 5th Bedfords, were both ordered to advance for the purpose of improving the position held in the mountains by securing the line up to the physical boundary separating the rugged mass of Judea from the more fertile hills of Samaria.

On the evening of 7th March the 5th Bedfords struck their bivouac and marched to Tarif, about five miles east of Wilhelma. This was the prelude to the attack made by the 162nd Brigade on Mezerieh and Mejdel Yaba.

This attack was delivered early on the morning of 12th March, and was a complete success. The objectives of the Battalion were Hill 489 and Mezerieh. These places were taken almost without opposition, and on the following day

Digitized by Google

the Battalion relieved the 4th Northamptons in front of Mejdel Yaba.

While the Battalion was at this place a great deal of wet weather was experienced, which made the work of patrolling parties doubly difficult and unpleasant. After a time the weather began to improve and things were sufficiently quiet for two officers and thirteen other ranks to obtain leave to Egypt. By Easter, however, the enemy was again active. On the night of Good Friday the Turks made an attempt to reach the position held by A Company. Soon after dinner time they came into conflict with our snipers and by half-past three in the afternoon our men saw a party of about 150 Turks crossing the ridge in extended order. They failed, however, to get beyond the Wadi Rabah. But on Easter Sunday another raid of the enemy met with rather more success. About tea-time large numbers of the enemy appeared upon the crest line, and at dusk he launched his attack in three waves, the Turks rushing down the slopes and calling upon Allah as they advanced. They were immediately engaged by Lewis gun fire, and, for a time, were content to occupy a line half way down the hill. But as darkness fell they opened a heavy fire on our post, under cover of which about a score of them crossed the *wadi* and reached the wire in front of A Company's position. The Battalion suffered several casualties, but the raiders were quickly bombed and dispersed. They retired, however, in good order, as is evident from the fact that the British patrols sent out immediately after the raid to search the slopes could find no trace of enemy dead.

It transpired afterwards that this attack was an organised raid, by which the Turks hoped to recapture Haram Ridge and Mejdel Yaba.

At this time enemy aircraft were very active, and the Battalion, in their sangars, had the satisfaction of seeing some of them shot down. Several officer reinforcing drafts now joined the Battalion, and on the 8th April heavy shelling was experienced, which resulted in two killed and

Digitized by Google

nineteen wounded. The next day the 75th Division which lay to the right of the 5th Bedfords advanced its line to the neighbourhood of Three Bushes Hill. Since the British attack was confined to a small frontage, the enemy were able to concentrate a great weight of artillery against the attacking force, which suffered very heavy casualties without, unfortunately, gaining much ground.

At this time there was some danger of the projected general advance developing into static warfare.

After the capture of Jerusalem and Jericho, General Allenby had obviously made up his mind that his next big advance must be made along the coastal plain, where his mounted troops would have full scope for their mobility. There was also a subsidiary plan for a big raid on Amman which would threaten the Hejaz railway and draw off the Turkish troops to the east of Jordan, thus weakening their line in the coastal plain, where General Allenby intended to strike.

Vile weather and the difficulties of the country spoiled the carrying out of what had been planned as a swift surprise raid by mounted men. To further complicate matters the great German offensive had been launched in France; and, during the first half of April, the Eastern theatre of war was drained of many seasoned troops, who were but ill replaced, gradually, by Indian troops, some of which had had no war experience, nor any very adequate training. In these circumstances nothing much that was of a progressive nature could be done that summer; but, for the only time in history civilised troops, as represented by the cavalry, supported for a full summer the terrible heat of the scorching Jordan Valley, with the temperature each day well over a hundred degrees and hot winds driving choking dust clouds up and down the valley in an atmosphere which at 1,200 feet below sea level is absolutely stifling.

It is possible that the Bedfords were not sent to France with the other Divisions in April, because at that time there were persistent rumours that two German Divisions were opposed to the British, somewhere in the sector held

Digitized by Google

by the 54th Division. In consequence of these rumours the whole Battalion was put into the line, with the 10th Londons immediately in reserve.

An attack on Kefa Kassim had been planned to take place about 15th April, but the enemy had evidently been informed of the British intentions, with the result that for four mornings the Battalion was put under a very heavy Turkish barrage. This led to that particular raid being abandoned. On the evening of 16th April the Battalion moved into Divisional Reserve near Wilhelma, and the change and rest from the line was much appreciated by every one. A week later two Companies moved to the neighbourhood of Yehudieh, near to which place a platoon leaders' school of instruction was opened at Red House Wood.

The month of May found the Bedfords in a different section of the Wilhelma sector, with patrols going out for salvage purposes and placing propaganda in various spots. Most of their operations were carried out round about Jiljulian Bridge, Wadi Ishkar and the Wadi Dhaheb ; but, although enemy patrols were constantly seen, there was very little fighting going on.

Things brightened up a bit towards the end of the month ; but, up to that time, the main observation by day seems to have been that of Turks mowing grass and, by night, that of Turks signalling.

It was on 2nd May that the Battalion moved back into the line again at Transfluvia East, where they relieved the 5th Norfolks ; Battalion Headquarters were situated at Cat House, about a mile south of the River Auja. On the 28th of the month the Indian Division advanced its line upon the Battalion's left, and there was much shelling and machine gun fire throughout the night.

Two nights later there was some excitement when a patrol of 2nd-Lieut. Gooderham and nine other ranks went out from their post to work up the Wadi Dhaheb.

They passed under a culvert in the railway embankment to a mound marked D22D on the maps and, although they found no enemy in the *wadi* they heard voices and the

Digitized by Google

sound of much movement close at hand. The patrol crawled in the direction from which the sound seemed to come and got within 150 yards of the enemy. Four camels were seen to leave in a north-easterly direction and the patrol accordingly crawled north and east until they came to within seventy yards of a sentry group. This they approached, but came suddenly upon a sleeping picket of eight Turks. These they bayoneted, but the screams of the dying men gave the alarm, and six more Turks, who had not been seen in the long grass, jumped up and opened fire. Another sentry group was, thereupon, alarmed and turned out to reinforce the picket. At the same time the rear guard of the patrol reported more enemy coming from the mound, whereupon the patrol fought its way through and saw two more Turks fall.

In that little patrol engagement at least ten Turks were killed and the others did not follow 2nd-Lieut. Gooderham and his men as they disappeared under the culvert and made their way back to our lines. The British casualties amounted only to one man wounded.

The next morning the G.O.C. 54th Division presented the ribbon of the M.M. to Corporal Welch outside Battalion Headquarters, with the whole of A Company on parade.

On 1st June Major C. R. James, M.C., came back to the unit from the 1/10th Battalion The London Regt., which he had been temporarily commanding, and assumed duty as Second-in-Command of the 5th Bedfords.

During the month the Battalion was in the Transfluvia East sector they had some of the best times that were experienced in this campaign—an abundance of good oranges, a splendid river to bathe in and a very quiet piece of front combined to make life pleasant, indeed, for active service in the field.

On 6th June a move was made to another bivouac area, in a lemon grove not far from Mulebbis. The few days spent here were employed in clearing the banks of the Auja of undergrowth and weeds, with a view to anti-mosquito work. A few days later the Battalion was back at

Digitized by Google

Yehudieh engaged on Company Training. On the 11th of the month the G.O.C. 54th Division held another parade for the presentation of honours, 2nd-Lieut. Gooderham and 2nd-Lieut. Mayers receiving the M.C., and Private Pennycock the M.M. On 20th June the Battalion moved to Mejdel Yaba, their position this time being on the left front of the village, and at the edge of the plain. By a curious coincidence they once more relieved the 5th Norfolks, at once came in for a good deal of shelling, and, on the 22nd, saw the British Headquarters' observation balloon shot down by an enemy aeroplane.

Their present stay at Mejdel Yaba was destined to be of only four days' duration.

The arrival back at Surafend was characterised by great excitement. Two months earlier division after division had departed for France, and after those had gone the 54th Division was the only one which remained purely British in composition, upon the reconstitution of fresh Divisions and commands as the Indian units arrived to make them up. Now rumour had it that the 54th Division, also, was to leave the Eastern for the Western Front. There was more than rumour in it too, since orders for the Division to proceed to France were actually issued, although they were subsequently countermanded. In the meantime the Battalion entrained at Ludd on the 25th June, and proceeded by rail to Kantara, where 50 per cent of the officers were granted leave to Port Said and Ismailia, while the rest of the Battalion went into camp at Kilo 4 on the morning of the 26th.

The orders for the move to France had been kept secret and speculation was rife as to the destination for which the Battalion was intended. Even now, as I write, I have before me a letter from one of the Bedfords, who was present, in which he says: "I really think it was to have been the Italian Front, which was being heavily attacked about this time."

The Battalion was not, however, to remain long in such peaceful quarters; either the need for retaining one

Digitized by Google

complete British Division of well proved courage and efficiency in the Eastern theatre of war was recognised, or the need for that Division in France became less urgent, and, on the 5th July, A Company and transport, with part of the baggage, entrained to go back to Ludd, at which place the Battalion completed its concentration on the 7th.

Tea was made at Ludd station and afterwards the Battalion marched to Surafend. There they stayed for ten days, before moving to Yehudieh and thence back to the line again in front of Mejdel Yaba, where they relieved the 1st Bn. The Manchester Regt., and the old round of patrol duty recommenced. July passed in routine training and certain lucky people were granted home leave, the first I believe—except the C.O.—to return to England on such leave since the Battalion had first gone overseas. Those who stayed in Palestine had fresh hardships to face, for an epidemic of sand-fly fever broke out, especially among the companies situated on low lying ground, and when the Battalion moved back to Beit Nabala it was only up to about one-third of its normal strength.

Reading through the War Diary of this period, it is curious to note how the pastimes of peace and the operations of war alternated, and sometimes were combined in recreation, if not actually in action.

While the Battalion was at Beit Nabala a Brigade tournament was held, in which there were competitions in bombing and Lewis gunnery, as well as such purely athletic and other sports as the 100 and 440 yards flat races, relay racing, high jumping, and horse jumping. This tournament took place on 7th September, and, although the 11th Bn. The London Regt. carried off the challenge cup for the battalion gaining the most points, the Bedfords finished a very good second, with victories in the tug-of-war, Company cross-country relay race and officers' jumping.

The next day the Commanding Officer and Company Commanders left at 7.30 a.m. for the line, where they stayed all day taking over from the 1/5th Essex. Meanwhile church parade had been held at Nabala, and at seven

Digitized by Google

o'clock in the evening the Battalion moved out of rest quarters for another tour of duty in the line. The relief was complete by midday on the 9th, and at two o'clock in the afternoon our guns bombarded Bureid Ridge, a place which was to become famous in the history of the Battalion.

After the bombardment a British patrol was sent out, but the Turks had got their heads up and gave our men a warm reception. The fire was exceptionally heavy, and of the Battalion patrol Lieut. D. F. P. Spurgeon, an officer from the London Regiment, who was attached to the 5th Bedfords, was killed, and Sergeant Brown and another man were wounded. At 11.30 that night a second patrol went out and remained in No Man's Land until dawn. But they failed to find Lieut. Spurgeon's body.

So far as the line was concerned, the 10th was a quiet day, but during the night of the 10th–11th, Bureid Ridge and Kefr el Bureid were treated to another heavy bombardment by our guns.

The information handed over to Lieut.-Colonel Brighten when the 5th Bedfords went into the line, was that Kefr el Bureid was held by the enemy with a small standing patrol on Bureid Ridge itself and that our patrols could go over this ridge whenever they liked. As we have seen, however, on the night of the 9th–10th, Lieut. Spurgeon's patrol had found the ridge strongly occupied, and the officer had lost his life.

In the circumstances, Lieut.-Colonel Brighten resolved to take advantage of a bombardment, which had been arranged for the night of 10th–11th September, to occupy the ridge, find out more about it and make a further search for Lieut. Spurgeon's body. Captain J. T. Yarde, M.C., was placed in charge of three fighting patrols, comprising three officers and fifty other ranks.

The orders issued to him were :—

"Covered by artillery barrage you will rush enemy sangars on top of Bureid Ridge, hold the position until dawn and obtain information below.

"*Object:* (1) To ascertain effect of artillery bombardment on enemy. (2) Kill or capture as many Turks

Digitized by Google

as possible. (3) Recover the body of Lieut. Spurgeon. *Information Required:* (1) Nature of enemy sangars on top of Bureid Ridge. (2) Nature of ground and approaches to Kr Um el Bureid from Pt. 437 north-west as far as Kr Um el Bureid. (3) Is Kr Um el Bureid occupied, if so—(*a*) In what strength? (*b*) Is it wired?"

Captain Yarde organised the following parties:—

(*a*) Second-Lieut. S. Duncan and twenty other ranks, who were to follow the artillery barrage closely, take Pt. 437, clear enemy sangars on top of the ridge, and push through as far as the line M.21 a. 4.4 to 1.7.

(*b*) Second-Lieut. W. R. Symons and twenty other ranks, with two Lewis guns, who were to support party (*a*).

(*c*) Second-Lieut. A. Hope and twelve other ranks, who were to go through the other two parties and reconnoitre Kr Um el Bureid.

At ten o'clock on the night of the 10th our artillery opened up as per programme, and the infantry moved forward; but, unfortunately, the shells from our 18-pounders were pitching too far over the ridge to the north-west and, apart from frightening the Turks, were not doing any particular amount of damage. Further than that, the Turks were found to be holding a strong natural position at Pt. 437 and along the top of the ridge to about M.21 a. central. Their strength appeared to be roughly fifty rifles and two automatic rifles.

Captain Yarde was very quick to realise the situation, and at once pushed in all three parties. The attack was delivered with dash and determination; and before it the enemy gave way so that the line of the first objective M.21 a. 4.4 to 1.7 was reached.

In the meantime, the British patrols had become pretty well isolated, through the enemy, just after ten o'clock, putting down a fairly heavy barrage of 77 mms, 5.9's and 4.2's all along our front line and in our support areas.

Second-Lieut. Hope, however, pushed forward with his patrol, to carry out the reconnaissance to Kr Um el Bureid. They succeeded in reaching a point about 150 yards south-

Digitized by Google

west of their objective, but were driven back by heavy fire, Hope's decision to withdraw being further influenced by the fact that bodies of the enemy were moving up from *wadis* on either side.

From then onwards to one o'clock on the morning of the 11th the Turks made spasmodic, disconnected efforts to regain the top of the ridge. These attacks, although supported by two machine guns from the northern banks of the Wadi Rabah, were successfully driven off. At one o'clock, however, the enemy barraged the Wadis Mayeh and Haram with 77 mms, 5.9's and 4.2's. Half an hour later double whistles were heard on three sides of the position the British patrols were holding, and immediately afterwards the enemy, supported by machine gun fire, launched a concerted attack from three sides, with about 150 men. The Turks came on throwing bombs, firing their rifles and calling on the name of Allah. The Yellow Devils stood to it, however, and beat them back with rifle and Lewis gun fire, and those who survived the bullets were dealt with by bombs at close range.

At one stage of the operations on Bureid Ridge one of Capt. Yarde's patrols suddenly bumped into a very much stronger Turkish patrol and, when our men were getting demoralised owing to casualties, Private S. Needham, who was a miner from Hull, saved the situation and won the Victoria Cross. He charged the enemy single-handed and, fighting like one possessed, accounted for many Turks. His berserk fury created such a diversion in the darkness and confusion that, for the moment, the enemy were checked and themselves gave way before him. His comrades were unanimous in thinking that Private Needham's action enabled them to get away, otherwise they would have all been surrounded and cut off. Had this happened the valuable information which Captain Yarde brought back would not have been available for further operations. It should be noted that Captain Yarde himself won a bar to his M.C. on this occasion.

From all the circumstances one may assume that the

Digitized by Google

Turks were late in launching this counter-attack, which should, no doubt, have synchronised with the putting down of their barrage half an hour earlier.

For a short time both sides rested upon their laurels, but just after two o'clock in the morning the Turks again shelled our position on Bureid Ridge and immediately afterwards launched an even stronger counter-attack, in which probably 300 men were engaged, and this time they advanced with greater determination.

The enemy came on as before and swarmed all round the devoted little band of 5th Bedfords, who at last had to give way to avoid being surrounded. Captain Yarde, however, had his men well in hand and extricated the patrols skilfully, as they fought their way out by alternate bounds. By the clever ruse of vehement cheering, each party covered the retirement of the next. The trick was old enough, in all conscience, and yet, in every case, it was successful; for the enemy, immediately the cheering burst out, threw themselves on the ground and fired high.

Our patrols ultimately reached the southern slope of Bureid Ridge below Pt. 437, but there they had to stop, for the enemy had begun to barrage the Wadi Mayeh. This barrage the Turks put down in alternate bursts until just after three o'clock in the morning; but Captain Yarde observed and timed the artillery fire and sent all his command safely across the *wadi* in small parties. He himself remained out with a few men until the very last, to make sure that neither stragglers nor wounded men were left behind.

In the course of this brilliant little action 2nd-Lieut. Hope had been wounded, two other ranks, who were missing, are believed to have been killed, twenty-two other men had sustained slight wounds, and one Lewis gun had been put out of action by the explosion of a bomb. On the other hand, the dead bodies of fifteen Turks had been counted and it could be safely assumed that a far greater number had been put out of action, particularly in the final phase when the Bedfords fought their way desperately

Digitized by Google

out of an extremely tight corner, and Needham won his V.C. As may be well imagined, however, it was impossible in the darkness and confusion to count bodies or observe enemy casualties, but a good many still forms were left on the hillside as the Bedfords retired.

As to the information obtained by the patrols, this showed that the Bureid position was practically a double ridge, with the Turkish real strength concentrated on the second level; that the position was carefully organised in a succession of well-built sangars, with each successive position further protected by two or three rows of trip wire, and the whole capable of strong defence from practically every side.

Our men had found numerous dumps of bombs and had not hesitated to use these missiles against their rightful owners. Two machine gun emplacements had been seen, complete with belt boxes, but the patrols had not been strong enough to bring away any of this booty.

This raid contributed greatly to the success of the final advance of the 54th Division, which commenced a few days later, because it had at first been intended to form up the attacking troops on the Bureid Ridge, but, as we have seen, Captain Yarde's raiding party proved that the ridge was strongly held and, therefore, would be unsuitable as a forming-up line.

That higher authority fully appreciated the value of the operation was clearly shown by a confidential memorandum addressed to B.G.C. 162nd Infantry Brigade, in which the G.O.C. expressed the highest admiration of the manner in which that operation was carried out. The letter continued: "The coolness and leadership of Captain Yarde, as well as the gallantry and fine discipline of those under his command, were beyond praise and worthy of the high standard that the 5th Bn. Bedfordshire Regt. has so long maintained."

The week following was employed in very busy preparations for the final stunt, which every one hoped and believed, would prove the turning point in the Palestine campaign.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

The Last Great Push

Mejdel Yaba—Syria—The Armistice at Beirut

For his autumn offensive General Allenby had prepared a plan, which for boldness of design, certainty of execution and completeness of success has since been hailed as a strategical masterpiece. For the better understanding of this plan it must be remembered that the vital points on the Turkish Lines of Communication were the railway junctions of Deraa, Semakh, Beisan and El Afule; since these places were important railway points and also the junctions of most of the roads available for a Turkish retreat.

The British commander's plan was to break the line held by the Turks in mid-September from Arsuf on the coast through Mugheir to the Jordan Valley, and this was to be done quickly and without involving the cavalry in fighting. This would allow his mounted troops to make for Messudieh Junction, with the turning of the flank of the 8th Turkish Army and the threat to the line of retreat of the 7th Turkish Army through Nablus as their direct objective. In addition, he had in mind a ride northwards of the great mass of his mounted troops to seize El Afule in the Plain of Esdraelon and Beisan in the Valley of Jezreel. If this could be done it would ensure not only the defeat, but also the complete destruction of the 7th and 8th Turkish Armies west of the Jordan.

At this time General Allenby had under his command approximately 12,000 sabres, 57,000 rifles, and 540 guns,

Digitized by Google

which gave him, approximately, a two to one superiority over the Turkish forces under the German General, Liman von Sanders.

The British Forces, however, were neither of as good a quality, nor as well trained as those who had smashed their way through the Beersheba–Gaza line nearly a year earlier; but, for all that, they were still greatly superior to the Turks, who were badly clothed, ill-fed, generally war-weary, and at constant odds with their German allies.

The strategy of the Third Battle of Gaza was reversed, for General Allenby had now determined to break through along the coast on the enemy's right flank, while leading him to believe that the blow was to be launched at the left of his line which covered the road to Damascus. So successfully were the enemy misled, and so skilfully was the British concentration on the left of our own line carried out, that, when the British were ready to strike, General Allenby had massed, on a front of some fifteen miles, 35,000 infantry, 9,000 cavalry, and 383 guns, while the unsuspicious Turk had allotted only 8,000 infantry and 130 guns to guard the right of his line, and had concentrated 24,000 troops and 270 guns over the remaining forty-five miles of his front, where he imagined our attack was pending, but where, in reality, we had only some 22,000 infantry, 3,000 cavalry and 157 guns, in comparison with the much larger force packed into that little fifteen mile sector by the coast.

It must be understood that the essential part of the Commander-in-Chief's plan was for the infantry to break the Turkish line swiftly and certainly at a chosen point for the cavalry to pass through. For this reason the fullest possible artillery support was to be accorded to the 21st Corps, to whom was committed our left offensive. To this attack were allotted 385 guns, of which all but seventy were field guns or howitzers, and these giving a proportion of approximately a gun to every fifty yards of frontage, provided, in point of fact, the heaviest concentration of artillery during the Palestine campaign—small enough,

Digitized by Google

however, when one remembers that in the big battles of 1917–18 in France there was approximately a gun or a howitzer to every ten yards.

The 21st Corps (Lieut.-General Sir E. Bulfin) was made up of the 3rd (Lahore) Division, 7th (Indian) Division, 54th (East Anglian) Division, commanded by Major-General S. W. Hare, whose son, Captain and Adjutant J. F. Hare, K.R.R.C., had joined the 5th Bedfords at Red House Wood nearly a year earlier, the 60th (London) Division and Corps Heavy Artillery. The Corps had also attached the French contingent, approximately equivalent to one Brigade, a small Italian contingent of the Bersaglieri, and was further strengthened by the transfer of the 60th Division from the 20th Corps. For cavalry they had the 5th Australian Light Horse Mounted Brigade.

Behind the 21st Corps, which was to break the way for the mounted troops, the cavalry were secretly assembled close to the coast and comprised the 4th and 5th Cavalry Divisions of the Desert Mounted Corps and the Australian Division.

Meanwhile, the 20th Corps, less one Division and some artillery, was to extend its front in the Judean Hills to enable the 21st Corps to effect the closest possible concentration.

As a prelude to the main offensive planned for the morning of 19th September the Emir Feisal's Arabs began operations against the Hedjaz Railway, which they cut in three places on the 16th and 17th. This offensive on the part of the Arabs, combined with air action, which did great damage, induced Liman von Sanders to draw off some of his reserves from Haifa.

The main forces for the real British offensive were concentrated upon our left flank by the 18th September. The *rôle* given to the 1/5th Bedfords was that of Divisional Reserve. The 1/5th Essex were detailed to assault Bureid Ridge and Kefr Kassim and, after they had taken these positions, the Bedfords were to concentrate in a *wadi*, about half a mile south of Kassim Wood.

Digitized by Google

That day the Battalion loaded the baggage wagons and sent them to the Divisional train. At eight o'clock in the evening it seems that the Turks were alarmed by the sound of a Mountain Brigade coming into action. Counter-battery work led to the area occupied by C Company being heavily shelled with 77's, and two casualties were sustained.

The opening move of the great battle was made by the 20th Corps, which, with its only remaining Divisions, the 10th and 53rd, held a front of over twenty miles in the Judean Hills. The first advance was to be made on Nablus by a converging movement from both flanks. Between the 10th and 54th Division the French Brigade was in the line opposite Rafat. The 54th Division at Mejdel Yaba faced Kefr Kassim; across the railway and north of the River Auja, the 53rd, 75th, 7th, and 60th Divisions stretched, from right to left, from the river-bank to the coast at Arsuf. Before them lay the Turkish position south of Tabsor, with its second line stretching along the line of Nahr el Falik to Et Tireh, on the railway running from Beersheba to Haifa. Behind the British Infantry Divisions was the Desert Mounted Columns.

The 53rd Division carried out a preliminary operation on the night of the 18th–19th September, and swung its right flank over the difficult ground bordering the Wadi es Samieh. Its further orders were to follow up the attack of the 21st Corps by a forced march north to close the eastern exits from the hill region of Nablus to the Jordan Valley.

The 53rd Division did its work well and had carried all objectives, except one strong Turkish redoubt, and the fighting was just dying down, when the thunder of guns from the plains to the west gave warning that the 21st Corps had begun the big push in earnest. Meanwhile the airmen were flying forward overhead to bomb the head-quarters of the 7th and 8th Turkish Armies at Nablus and Tul Keram, and his centre of communications at El Afule.

At 3.30 on the morning of the 19th the Turks again shelled the area of C Company of the 5th Bedfords, but did

Digitized by Google

no damage, although the 161st Brigade was at that time in process of deployment. As this Brigade deployed the patrols were withdrawn through its lines, and at 4.30 the British bombardment started all along the front, and the 161st Brigade advanced. The enemy artillery replied at once; 77 mm. shells began to burst among the Bedfords, and Major F. Owens was slightly wounded.

About a third of the front allotted to the 21st Corps was unfavourable for infantry activities, so that the actual frontage of the attack was reduced to approximately ten miles. The French set out to storm the ridge opposite Rafat, and found it strongly held. It was essential, however, that they should take it, for this village was to form the pivot for the wheel of the 21st Corps to the right. The 54th Division, on the left of Rafat at Mejdel Yaba, was to advance on Kefr Kassim and then swing north-east. Between the 54th Division and the 3rd Indian Division, on their left, stretched a wide gap of open plain, over which it would have been hardly possible to launch troops to the assault. The 75th and the two Indian Divisions were detailed to take Tabsor as a first objective, and then to push through to the line Jiljulieh–Kalkilieh–Et Tireh; and, finally, the 60th Division was to attack up the coast until it reached the mouth of the Nahr el Falik, where a bridgehead was to be formed for the 5th Cavalry Division to pass through. With the cavalry safely despatched on their mission the 60th Division, with the 5th Australian Light Horse Brigade on its left, was to launch a blow north-east to Tul Keram.

The intense bombardment, which commenced at the zero hour of 4.30 a.m. on the 19th September, lasted but fifteen minutes. It was not intended to cut wire, as the assault troops were provided with means of crossing or severing it.

All along the line the British advance was entirely successful. The French came in for some hard fighting on the extreme right of the 54th Division, while the British troops of that Division were called upon to overcome a stout Turkish resistance, north of Kefr Kassim; and, since

Digitized by Google

it was opposite that place that the Bedfords were located when the attack began, it is obvious that the Battalion came in for its fair share of the roughest fighting in that particular phase of the battle.

At six o'clock on the morning of 19th September the Battalion, under the command of Major C. R. James, moved off by platoons with A Company leading. Lieut.-Colonel Brighten, it should be remarked, was given other work to do that day. A Company was held up for a short time, when the enemy put down a 5.9 barrage on the Wadi Rabah, while C and D Companies had to pass through a pretty stiff barrage when they crossed the Wadi Miyeh, and there they suffered a quite disproportionate number of casualties, having regard to the circumstance that the Battalion at that time was in Divisional Reserve. The Battalion was heavily shelled again as it passed down the Wadi Ika, and a further dozen casualties were sustained. By eleven o'clock, however, the concentration area was reached, and during an hour's halt, attempts were made to establish touch with the 4th Northamptons. By noon the Bedfords were into Kassim Wood, where they found the Northamptons moving east to Sivri Wood. On debouching from Kassim Wood another barrage was passed with comparatively few casualties, and on reaching the shelter of a small hill a halt was ordered, while the Adjutant and the Company Commanders sized up the situation. At this time about a dozen whiz-bangs came over and caused not a little excitement.

Just before one o'clock A and D Companies moved east in artillery formation, came immediately under heavy fire from 5.9's, 4.2's, and 77's, and suffered another twenty casualties.

During this shelling shelter was found in a *wadi*, and there Captain J. T. Yarde, M.C., sustained the serious wounds from which he died two days later in No. 76 Casualty Clearing Station at Ludd.

The death of this gallant officer was a great loss to the Battalion, for he had gone out with them from England;

Digitized by Google

and, through the fighting, the sufferings and the hardships of Gallipoli, Egypt and Palestine he had proved himself, not only a brave soldier and a cool and able leader, but a good officer in every respect; an ever cheerful, considerate and helpful comrade.

Meanwhile B and C and the Headquarters Companies had taken up the line in which the Battalion remained halted until two o'clock in the afternoon. The Northamptons then moved on, with the 5th Bedfords following in support. The final objective, north of Kefr Kassim, was carried by 4.30 in the afternoon and Battalion Headquarters established. A Company was at once detailed for outpost duty, while the rest of the Battalion bivouacked in the famous Wadi Kanah. A deep-bore well and large quantities of Turkish stores and material were discovered, and by seven o'clock that evening the first line wheeled transport was got up, but the camels did not arrive until after midnight.

On the following morning the Battalion moved a mile further up the *wadi*, and then, again, shifted back to nearly the same place. During the next three days salvaging parties were sent out and large dumps of Turkish shells were found and collected.

The action had not been nearly so severe as that of the Third Battle of Gaza, so far as the Battalion was concerned, but the men were considerably exhausted and had suffered much from thirst during the long advance over difficult ground in intense heat.

By the night of the 21st September the new positions of the 21st and 20th Corps from left to right formed a horseshoe with Tul Keram as the left tip, Nablus Junction as the right tip and an advanced centre post of the 3rd Division at Messudieh Junction, midway between the two tips. Across the Jerusalem Road, seven miles to the east and as far north as Nablus, the 53rd Division had made good their hold upon the hills commanding the Wadi Fara. There our airmen caught a long column of Turkish artillery, transport and troops, and kept them penned in the narrow,

Digitized by Google

precipitous gorge for four hours while they rained bombs and bullets upon them. The 7th and 8th Turkish Armies had, to all intents and purposes, now been completely destroyed.

The rest of the war in Palestine is mainly the tale of amazing marches and brilliant cavalry actions.

The fall of Haifa prepared the way for the pursuit to Damascus and Aleppo, and on 25th September the final advance began. Haifa was taken on the 23rd, and Damascus on the 30th.

Meanwhile, of all the 100,000 men who had comprised the Turkish Armies in Palestine and Syria, on the 19th September, when the last great push began, only 17,000 escaped to the north and, of these, it is probable that no more than 4,000 could be reckoned as fighting men. The hostile forces concentrated in Northern Syria were now nothing more nor less than a rabble, for they had neither organisation, artillery nor transport. It was not to be expected, therefore, that they would offer a very stout resistance to the British occupation of Aleppo and the rest of Syria.

There was, however, the serious problem of supply to be considered, since Damascus lay 150 miles from the base of the British Army and Aleppo was yet 200 miles further on. It is true that the occupation of the port of Beirut would shorten the line of supply inland by road and railway to Damascus and, meanwhile, the 7th (Meerut) Division left Haifa on 3rd October, and marched over the Ladder of Tyre. And so on by Tyre and Sidon to Beirut.

On the evening of 25th October, when General McAndrew, commanding the 5th Cavalry Division, was about to attack Aleppo, Nassir's Arabs broke into the city, where they had many sympathisers, engaged the Turks in desperate hand-to-hand fighting in the streets and finally drove the garrison out of the town, which General McAndrew entered at 10 a.m. on the 26th with his armoured cars.

It is interesting to note that the final great push, which commenced on 19th September from the region of Arsuf

Digitized by Google

NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R L

Digitized by Google

PL. XIX.] LUTON, 1926. [*R* 243

H.R.H. The Prince of Wales, accompanied by Capt. W. H. Ridgewell, M.B.E. (commanding the Guard of Honour), and Samuel H. Whitbread, Esq., C.B. (Lord-Lieutenant of Bedfordshire), inspecting Guard of Honour of the 5th Bn. Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regt. (T.A.).

Digitized by Google

and concluded on 26th October with the capture of Aleppo, resulted in the capture by the Egyptian Expeditionary Force from the Turkish forces of 360 guns and 75,000 prisoners, of whom 200 officers and 3,500 other ranks were Germans or Austrians, while the whole of our own casualties were under 5,000. During those thirty-eight days the whole British front had advanced over 350 miles, while the 5th Cavalry Division had covered more than 500 miles, a wonderful achievement for all arms in such a climate.

After the decisive battle of the 19th–20th September, the 5th Bedfords had spent three days cleaning up, as we have seen, and on the 23rd a move was made to Hableh, situated about a mile and a half from the western end of the Wadi Kanah. There they rested for some days, but on the 27th the great march northwards, which was to take them right along the Syrian coast, was begun. Cashon was reached on the first day, thence they tramped onward through Kherkir, Zimmerin and Athlet to Haifa, at which place they halted for two days near Mount Carmel, before marching on to Acre. Here, Lieut.-Colonel Brighten took over duty as Officer Commanding Troops Acre, and here, just outside the historical old town, the Battalion pitched its first camp. Unfortunately, that camp was pitched with more speed than circumspection, and it was not long before the bivouac had to be transferred to the edge of the sea north of the town. This move was made necessary by the descent of a perfect plague of mosquitos upon the spot the Battalion had originally selected for its resting place.

The stay at Acre was a fairly long one; the Battalion furnished the town garrison, and the changing of the main guard, carried out by the Duty Company, accompanied by the drums and fifes, was a daily attraction to the inhabitants. During this period a number of the men who had won honours in the recent battle received the ribbons of their awards from the Divisional Commander, and on 15th October, General Allenby, guided by Lieut.-Colonel Brighten, passed through the town on his way to Beirut.

Digitized by Google

Upon occasions the men found constant guard mounting duties somewhat onerous, as the Battalion was then in the midst of an epidemic of malaria, and, although a rest had been welcome, every one was glad when the 24th October came round and the northward march was resumed. With halts at night at Mesuirhied, Ras-el-Ain, Khan el Kasimieje, Ainburak, Saida, Delhemeye, and Shuieatt, the Battalion marched with the Brigade group to Beirut, where they arrived and halted outside the town at 7.45 a.m. on the 31st October.

Preparations were then made for a ceremonial march through the town and at 10.30 in the morning the Brigade group, without its wheeled transport and camels, marched through the streets.

This was a great occasion. The local inhabitants welcomed the coming of the British troops with great enthusiasm, and in the square waited the Corps Commander and General Officers, both French and British, and there the G.O.C. took the salute, as the men, who had fought so well and marched so far, filed past him.

After the march past the Battalion went into bivouac a mile east of the town; but the excitements of the day were not yet over, since the news was yet to come that an Armistice between the Allies and Turkey had been concluded. This led to further general rejoicings, and the troops were allowed into the town until seven o'clock that evening.

The march was continued on 1st November, but was not made any more pleasant by the bursting of a heavy thunderstorm, and, on 4th November, the column entered Ibrahim, which was the furthest northern point that was reached by the Battalion. During their stay in that place serge clothing was issued and, as upon the occasion of a previous issue of serge when the Battalion was in Anzac on Gallipoli, this warmer clothing was very welcome, as the weather had got much colder. Training continued, but it was not a particularly happy period, on account of the rain, which fell incessantly.

Digitized by Google

About six o'clock on the evening of 11th November the news was received that Germany had accepted the Allies' terms, and that the Armistice had been signed. This news was, of course, the signal for great rejoicing and general merry-making throughout the camp. Verey lights were soon flying in all directions and thousands of rounds of ammunition were fired by the Lewis guns into the sea. The revelry, needless to state, was kept up until a late hour.

By 15th November the strength of the Battalion had become so greatly reduced that it was decided to amalgamate the four companies into two. A and B Companies were made one and called Y Company; and C and D Companies became Z Company.

On Monday, 18th November, the march back to Beirut was begun, and that place was reached on the second day, after the Brigade group had rested for a night at Antura. At Beirut the Battalion went into camp among the pine-woods on the Damascus Road, about a mile south-east of the town, and a few days later tents were provided.

There was some excitement about this time, and orders were given for the Battalion to stand-by in case of trouble in the town; but, fortunately, their services were not needed. The 4th December saw what still remained of the 5th Bedfords embarked on H.M.T. *Ellenga* for Egypt. They arrived at Kantara some twenty-four hours later and went into Helmieh Camp near Cairo on the next morning.

During the following days large reinforcing drafts arrived and the old four-Company organisation was resumed.

The 20th December was a red-letter day for the 5th Bedfords, and, indeed, the whole 54th Division, which marched through Cairo during the victory celebrations, passing on its way the Commander-in-Chief. Christmastide was observed as a general holiday, and every one enjoyed themselves greatly, considering the distance they were from the old country. Thus, the end of a memorable year found the 5th Bedfords still on foreign service, but looking eagerly forward to demobilisation and an early return to the homes from which they had been so long absent.

Digitized by Google

To the 54th Division belonged the peculiar distinction of being the only infantry division which had fought through all the phases of the Palestine campaign unchanged in its order of battle. And what was the history of the 54th Division is also the history of the 5th Bedfords.

The battle honours of the Battalion include the landing at Suvla Bay, where they won their proud nickname of the " Yellow Devils," trench warfare among the rugged confines of Anzac, the long and wearisome defence of the Suez Canal ; next, the exhausting march to the Holy Land, through the Sinai Desert ; then the three battles of Gaza, the Turkish trench system in the Judean foothills, the last great battle after Jericho and Jerusalem had fallen, and the final pursuit into Syria.

The Battalion had sailed from England at the end of July 1915 for Gallipoli, and was withdrawn from Anzac on 4th December 1915, a few days after the famous, but terrible, blizzard. The year 1916 was spent in very trying conditions along the Suez Canal, and in February 1917 the march to Palestine began. The 1/5th Bedfords received special recognition after the Second Battle of Gaza by reason of two very successful raids on Umbrella Hill, the main *point d'appui* on the right of the Turkish lines. And from those raids the 54th Division had taken its Divisional Sign. When the third attack on Gaza was made the 54th Division had to capture the Turkish first and second lines on the coastal side, and it was the taking of Sheik Hassan by the 1/5th Bedfords, and Gun Hill by the 1/11th Londons, which caused the enemy's position at Gaza to become untenable. After four days' hard fighting the enemy retreated and after a short rest the Battalion followed north with the Division.

After a winter spent among the orange groves and mud swamps of Mulebbis, a further advance was made on 12th March along the Judean foothills, the 162nd Brigade penetrating to a depth of four miles and capturing Mejdel Yaba, a famous stronghold in Crusader times. Later, a prominent part was played by the 5th Bedfords in the

Digitized by Google

general attack of 19th–20th September 1918, along the foothills near Kefr Kassim, when, in one day, two Brigades of the 54th Division captured 600 prisoners and eleven guns. Then followed the march to Beirut, which place was reached on the day that war with Turkey ended.

During the campaign the following honours had been won by the 5th Bedfords:—V.C., one; C.M.G., one; D.S.O., two; M.C., thirteen and two bars; D.C.M., ten; M.M., forty-seven and one bar. Three foreign decorations were granted and sixteen officers and twenty other ranks were mentioned in despatches.

The strength of the Battalion when it left England was 26 officers and 750 other ranks, but during the period of its active service the numbers of reinforcements who passed through the Battalion were 231 officers and 4,939 other ranks. Among the total casualties sustained were 17 officers and 202 other ranks killed; 29 officers and 660 other ranks wounded; two other ranks missing; one officer and ten other ranks prisoners of war; and 116 officers and 4,125 other ranks sick.

No history of the Battalion would be complete without a short résumé of the career of Lieut.-Colonel Edgar W. Brighten, who commanded it throughout its active service career.

Colonel Brighten, in 1898, joined the 3rd Volunteer Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment as a 2nd-Lieutenant, and was promoted Lieutenant in 1899. He was one of the first officers of the Battalion to volunteer for active service during the South African War. In that campaign he served with the 2nd Battalion in command of the 3rd Volunteer Service Company, which saw service in the Orange Free State and Western Transvaal with General Sitwell's column, and was awarded the South African War medal. On returning to England Mr. Brighten, as he was then, resumed his work as a solicitor, but stayed on in the 3rd Volunteer Battalion, and was promoted Captain in 1902. In that rank he was transferred to the 5th Battalion when the Territorial Force was constituted.

Digitized by Google

At the Coronation of King George he was in command of a representative detachment of his Battalion, and received the Coronation medal. In 1912 he was promoted Major and at the outbreak of war was Second-in-Command of the 5th Battalion.

He was promoted Lieut.-Colonel in January 1915 and succeeded Lieut.-Colonel F. N. Butler in command of the Battalion before it left England, and he commanded it right through the war.

For his services at the Suvla Bay landing he was awarded the C.M.G.; in Palestine he gained the D.S.O., and was mentioned in despatches five times.

After the Armistice, during the rising in Egypt, Lieut.-Colonel Brighten was in charge of an important district in Upper Egypt. Later, he was given command of the 7th Royal Welsh Fusiliers and appointed Officer Commanding in Cyprus. It was at this time that he was awarded the Territorial Decoration, after completing twenty-three years' service in the Volunteers and Territorial Force.

On 21st February 1917 Lieut.-Colonel Brighten had been granted a commission in the Regular Army as Major, and on 3rd June 1919 he was promoted Brevet-Lieut.-Colonel. In 1920 he was posted to the 2nd Battalion The Bedfordshire Regiment in India, and served with that unit until 1924, when he was appointed an instructor at the Senior Officers' School at Belgaum, in Bengal. On completing this appointment in 1928 he rejoined the 2nd Battalion at Dover as Second-in-Command, and on 3rd June 1929 he was appointed to succeed Lieut.-Colonel W. R. H. Dann, D.S.O., in the command of the Battalion. Lieut.-Colonel Brighten, incidentally, is the only Regular Army Commanding Officer holding the Territorial Decoration.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

The Post-War Period

THE 5TH BN. THE BEDFORDSHIRE AND HERTFORDSHIRE REGIMENT

Post-War Reorganisation—The Defence Force—The Company Flags—Army Manœuvres, 1925—Guard of Honour to H.R.H. The Prince of Wales

After the war was over and the various Territorial units had returned to England, it was decided to reconstitute the Territorial Force ; and, once more, the Lords Lieutenant, who have raised our Auxiliary Forces from time immemorial, were called upon to perform their old time functions.

By command of the King the Lords Lieutenant, and the Lord Mayors and Lord Provosts of Great Britain attended at Buckingham Palace, on Saturday 15th May 1920, when His Majesty addressed them on the subject of the Territorial Army, and afterwards entertained them at luncheon.

The Lords Lieutenant, who wore uniform, met in the Throne Room, where the King joined them at 12.30 p.m.

In his address the King reminded his guests that it was more than twelve years since his father, King Edward VII, had called upon them to use their utmost endeavours to create a strong and efficient Territorial Force. He pointed out that in the most prodigious events in military history that had taken place more than a million Territorial soldiers had fought overseas, shoulder to shoulder on equal

Digitized by Google

terms with the Regular Forces. His Majesty pointed out that the basis of a voluntary military system must be a Territorial Army of sufficient strength. The Territorial Army was to be remodelled on the experience gained in the war; and, as in the past, the duty of raising, equipping and maintaining that Army was to be entrusted to the County Associations.

His Majesty called upon the Lords Lieutenant to take up their task once more, and urged the Lord Mayors and Lord Provosts to render their utmost assistance.

It was realised that after the long years of hard service and on the morrow of so great a triumph there would be a sense of exhaustion and apathy, which would render the re-formation of a volunteer citizen army no light task.

The Lord Lieutenant of Bedfordshire, Mr. Samuel H. Whitbread, with the will of those who had served through the war to aid him, had no fears concerning the response to be expected in the county, and the 5th Battalion was re-formed early in 1920, under the command of Lieut.-Colonel J. Clutton, T.D., authority having been given already for recruiting to commence from the 16th February 1920.

Of the officers who had served with the Battalion during the Great War, the following rejoined the new Battalion :— Lieut.-Colonel J. Clutton, T.D., Majors J. W. Taylor and R. Forrest, M.B.E., Captains R. O. Clark, H. S. Toogood, B. W. Smythe, M.C., and A. J. Mander, and Lieut. K. H. Ricketts, while of the war-time other ranks, sixteen N.C.O.'s and twenty-three men rejoined between February 1920 and the date of proceeding to annual camp on 31st July 1920. By Army Order 269 of 1919, published on 29th July 1919, the name of the Regiment had been changed to that of The Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment.

The first link between the reconstituted battalion and the old war-time fighting unit, which had borne the brunt of battles, endured incredible hardships, and earned for the Battalion a nickname as imperishable as that of " The Die-Hards," " The Cherry Pickers " and " The Fore and

Digitized by Google

Aft," was forged in the spring of 1921, when a great Coal Strike threw the whole war-weary country into confusion, disorganised reconstruction and made it necessary for the call to be issued for men to meet a national emergency.

People who had declared that no man would volunteer for further military service in any circumstances, received the shock of their lives at that period. For officers, N.C.O.'s and men, old and young, fit and unfit, well-to-do or broke to the wide, wide world, rolled up at all Company Headquarters eager to fill any niche that could be found for them, and to serve in any capacity warranted by the circumstances.

Considerations of high policy precluded the emergency being met by the employment, as such, of Territorial units; wherefore enlistment was to be for a period of ninety days' service in the Defence Force. The title given to the unit created in the county was The 5th Bn. Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regt. (Defence Force).

Headquarters on formation was made up as follows:—

Officer Commanding—Lieut.-Colonel J. Clutton, T.D.
Second-in-Command—Major Miller
Adjutant—Major Le Huquet
Quartermaster—Captain Corner, M.C.
R.S.M.—R.S.M. Walker, D.C.M.
R.Q.M.S.—R.Q.M.S. A. Milton, M.C., D.C.M.

The formation of the unit was not without its funny side. Serving Territorials, who wished to take on for ninety days in the new force, were, of course, fully clothed and equipped; but the drill hall was ankle deep in "clobber," which was required for the recruits. All this stuff was watched over jealously by Captain Corner, while R.S.M. Walker stood by, and, I honestly believe, picked out the old hands by the unerring instinct which seemed to guide them to the best of the kit and equipment. But, apart from all that, it did one good to see the smiles, to catch the delighted exclamations of greeting and to hear the contented sighs of the men who were "back to the Army again." Some of them looked as if they had, in very

Digitized by Google

truth, come " out of the wet and the cold " and would be mighty glad to get back to Army rations.

Things were none too easy at first, as every one's rank and duties kept going up and down and down and, perhaps, up again, as the fresh arrivals came in. Considerations of seniority in the Army list did not seem to matter; but, somehow, it all worked out right in the end, mainly because there were no petty jealousies and every one was anxious to do his job, no matter what it might be.

The records of service of the officers who wished to join made extraordinarily interesting reading, and it was clear that the officer ranks of the unit could have been filled with commanding officers quite easily, and they were ready to serve as anything from subalterns upwards.

By 22nd April, 525 recruits had been sworn in, and then recruiting was suspended; but, by that time, the newly-formed battalion had been concentrated since the 18th at Cardington Aerodrome, where the R38 was under construction.

There were all the conveniences of barracks in the quarters, which had been occupied by R.A.F. personnel during the later stages of the war, and many humorous remarks were passed by the men concerning how well the airmen seemed to have done themselves. There were wash-houses, baths and lavatories, all accessible from the sleeping quarters, all of which was very different from the two or three hundred yards' sprint, in the rain or icy blast of a war-time morning, to open ablution benches, such as many of the men remembered.

The huts, however, were not capable of holding the whole Battalion, and so the Luton and Dunstable Companies were accommodated in the " Glass House," or " Crystal Palace," as a part of the actual airship works was nicknamed. The floor was of concrete; and the men found that straw palliasses laid upon it made but a poor substitute for civilised beds, or even the three planks on a couple of little trestles, which they had known during the war.

The cooks, including the sexton and bellringer from

Digitized by Google

Ridgmont village, did their work well in a good cook-house, which the R.A.F. had left fully equipped in the matter of excellent ovens. The Battalion was also well served with canteens.

Most of the men had but little to learn in the way of soldiering, but their drill was a bit rusty and they needed reconditioning. Therefore route marches, headed by the Regimental Band, were at once ordered, and "P.T." became the staple item of early morning parade. Morning parade was at 9 a.m., and training went on until 12.30 noon, with only one break, during which the dry canteen did a roaring trade. There was an afternoon parade from 2 to 3 p.m., and, after that the men were free to go pretty well where they liked, except over the barbed-wire which marked the confines of the aerodrome, since no one was allowed anywhere near R38.

All sorts of sporting fixtures were arranged, and, with S. V. Graham, of county fame, serving as a corporal in the unit, cricket took on an added interest. There were also football matches and boxing contests.

The fact that the Battalion needed very little knocking into shape became clear on 26th April, when Major-General S. W. Hare, who had commanded the 54th Division in Egypt during the war, carried out an inspection at Cardington. The G.O.C. found the Battalion steady on parade and efficient in its movements. He saw many familiar faces, too, as the men marched past, and he had spoken already to several who had served under him out East.

Three days later the Battalion was again inspected; this time by General Lord Horne, G.C.B., K.C.M.G., A.D.C., the G.O.C.-in-C. Eastern Command, who was accompanied by his Chief of Staff, Colonel C. W. Gwyn, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., Colonel Lord Hampden, C.B., C.M.G., A.D.C., the G.O.C. East Midland Brigade, and his Brigade-Major, Major J. F. Harter, D.S.O., M.C.

The Battalion was under Lieut.-Colonel J. Clutton, T.D., Major Miller, Second-in-Command, and the Adjutant, Major Le Huquet. The Companies were commanded by

Digitized by Google

Major C. H. Miskin, M.C., Captain Jones, D.S.O., M.C., Captain C. A. F. Wingfield, and Captain R. Orlebar.

During his inspection the G.O.C.-in-C. paused here and there to chat with men whose decorations and war medals bore eloquent testimony to their personal courage and considerable service. After the march past in column of route, Lord Horne addressed the Battalion, which he stated was the finest and best set up Defence Force unit he had yet inspected, and he reminded the men that there was not a regiment in the Service with a better record than that which had been built up by the 5th Bn. The Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regt.

It was on 17th May 1921, while the Defence Force was still embodied, that Princess Beatrice visited Ampthill for the purpose of unveiling the War Memorial and opening the Alameda and the Ex-Service Men's Hostel. There were present at these ceremonies His Grace the Duke of Bedford, K.G., Colonel F. A. D. Stevens, Chief Constable of the County, Lieut.-Colonel J. Clutton, T.D., commanding the 5th Bn. The Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regt., Captain Orlebar and Captain Anthony E. Wingfield.

Troops from the Depot The Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regt. and from the 5th Bn. The Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regt. (Defence Force), were conveyed in Army lorries from Kempston and Cardington, respectively, to Ampthill, where they furnished the Guard of Honour, under Captain C. A. F. Wingfield and Captain H. Chevenix Trench, with Lieut. P. Chaundler, M.C., carrying the Regimental Colour of the 5th Battalion.

June found the Defence Force unit still at Cardington, and on the 3rd of that month, a big regimental sports meeting was held in Russell Park, Bedford, the eastern part of which was enclosed for the purpose.

The band, which, by this time, was in fine form, rendered selections throughout the afternoon and considerable entertainment was provided by Corporal Cully, Lance-Corporal Brawn, Private Coleman and Private Myers, who turned out dressed as clowns.

Digitized by Google

The sports began with a three-and-a-half miles road race from Cardington to Russell Park. Private Ball was first man home, followed by Private Darlow, Private Burley and Corporal Pache, so that A Company finished three men in the first four home. The inter-Company tug-of-war also was won by A Company, who beat D Company in two straight pulls, while the officers were easily defeated by the sergeants. B Company won the inter-Regimental relay event, and R.S.M. Walker the sergeants' race.

At the conclusion of the sports the prizes were presented by Mrs. Clutton.

Nothing of further note happened while the Force was embodied and between 6th and 11th July 1921 it was disbanded, and the Territorial Battalion resumed its normal activities upon going into annual summer training camp at Eastbourne.

The question of Battalion accommodation was rapidly becoming an urgent matter by this time. Up to then the Battalion Headquarters had been located in the old Drill Hall in Gwyn Street, Bedford, with A Company sharing accommodation in the same building. B Company commenced its post-war career in Dunstable Street, Ampthill; C Company found temporary quarters at 46 Castle Street, Luton, while D Company made the best it could of somewhat dilapidated premises in Lake Street, Leighton Buzzard. Later, the Dunstable detachment was housed in the old Drill Hall in Church Street of that town.

The ideas of the public regarding the importance and dignity of the Territorial Force had changed considerably since their service in the war, and strong general feeling was expressed in the opinion that the various quarters occupied by the County Territorial Battalion were inadequate, both in appearance and accommodation.

Remarkable evidence that the opinion prevailed in high quarters that the Bedfords were worthy of better accommodation, was forthcoming in a speech which General the Earl of Cavan, K.P., G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O., K.C.B., at that time Chief of the Imperial General Staff, made to the 5th

Digitized by Google

Battalion at Cardington Camp, upon the occasion of his inspection of the 162nd East Midland Infantry Brigade on 10th August 1922.

" You men of Bedford," said Lord Cavan, " you began the war very little known ; you ended the war best known of the whole British line. No Regiment has a finer record than you have."

In another respect, also, the worthiness of their Territorial unit had been brought home to the people of Bedfordshire, when, nine days earlier, four of the Company battle flags, which had accompanied the Battalion on its campaigns in Gallipoli, Egypt and Palestine 1915–18, were handed to the Lord Lieutenant of the county for laying up in the Shire Hall.

The presentation of the Company battle flags to the county took place at the Shire Hall, on the morning of Tuesday 1st August 1922, when the 5th Bn. The Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regt., then in summer training camp at Cardington, marched into the county town, under the command of Lieut.-Colonel J. Clutton, T.D.

The flags, which were now to be handed over, had been sewn and presented by the ladies of Bedfordshire to the Battalion in the first place ; but, so tattered and shot-torn had they become in the years of service, it had been found necessary to preserve them as glazed pictures, which were to hang in the Shire Hall.

To the Battalion these flags are sacred relics, for they epitomise and enshrine the service and the sacrifice of some who still serve and of a great many more who have passed on. They form, too, a wonderful link with the still more distant past ; since to-day they hang beneath the fading colours of a Volunteer Regiment of the county of more than a hundred years ago.

These flags, moreover, are representative of the actions the 1/5th Bedfords fought in at Suvla, Anzac, the Canal Defences and in Palestine, but the first Suvla flag was blown to pieces. The officers originally commanding the Companies, whose flags these were, were : A Company,

Digitized by Google

Captain B. C. Cumberland; B Company, Captain C. T. Baker; C. Company, Captain W. K. Meakin, all three of whom were killed in the Suvla Bay action of 14th August 1915; and D. Company, Captain R. Forrest, who still survives.

Attached to the frames which contain the Company battle flags are the following particulars of battle honours:

(1) Suvla Bay, Aug. 1915; Anzac, Aug.–Dec. 1915; Egypt, Jan. 1916.
(2) Egypt, Bir Tawal, 1916–17; Palestine, 1st and 2nd Gaza, 1917.
(3) 3rd Gaza, Sheik Hassan, Zeify Hill, Yaba Hill, 1st and 2nd Umbrella Hill, and Hereford Ridge.
(4) Mejdel Yaba, Advance from Jaffa, Jerusalem, Haifa and Acre, 1918.

Long before the troops arrived the civilian populace had formed the sides of a large square, enclosing the whole Market Place, and presently the Lord Lieutenant, accompanied by a numerous retinue of Deputy Lieutenants in uniform, took up his position at the foot of John Howard's statue to receive the troops and take the salute.

Punctually at eleven o'clock the 5th Battalion, with band playing, colours flying, and burnished bayonets flashing in the sun marched proudly over Bedford Bridge, to the quick step of the regimental march, which is the same as that of the Rifle Brigade, and commemorates the formation of the original Bedfordshire Rifle Volunteers in 1860.

There was " eyes left " from the Company Commanders in turn, as the men swung by the Lord Lieutenant standing at the salute. The troops passed on round St. Paul's Square, and the Guard of Honour formed up facing the Shire Hall, with the Regimental Colour straight opposite the porch, and it was noticeable that every man's breast bore a goodly array of war medals.

The Lord Lieutenant of Bedfordshire, accompanied by the Lord Lieutenant of Hertfordshire, Colonel Lord Hampden, C.B., C.M.G., A.D.C., Lieut.-Colonel J. Clutton,

Digitized by Google

T.D., and the Deputy Lieutenants, inspected the Guard of Honour, before repairing to the lobby of the Shire Hall, where the Company battle flags were displayed.

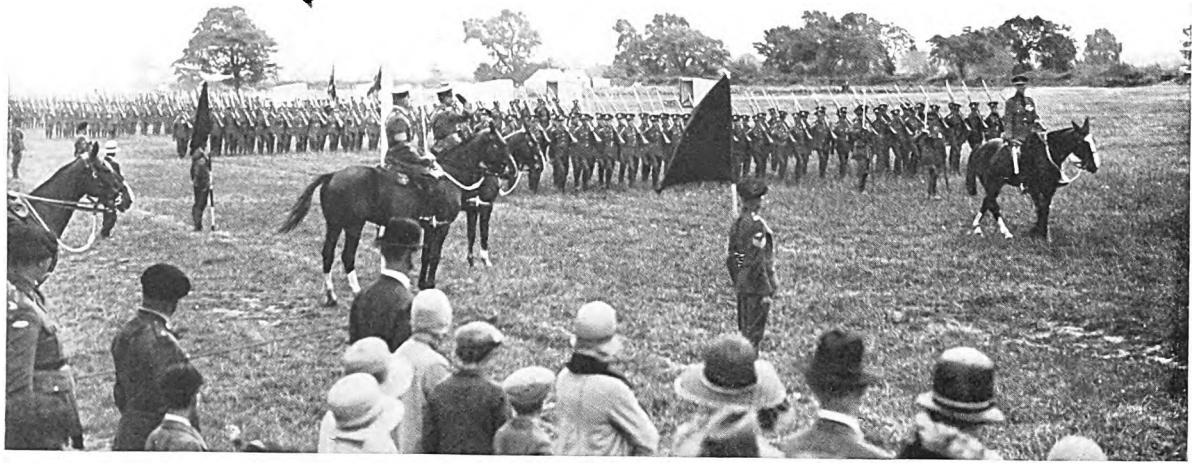
Among those who were present were His Grace the Duke of Bedford, K.G.; Lord St. John of Bletso; Colonel the Rt. Hon. Lord Ampthill, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.; Colonel Spencer Jackson; Lieut.-Colonel R. R. B. Orlebar; Lieut.-Colonel F. A. D. Stevens, C.B.E.; Lieut. Colonel Talbot Jarvis, D.S.O.; Lieut.-Colonel R. G. Coombs; Lieut.-Colonel John Harvey, D.S.O.; Mr. A. H. Wingfield; Mr. W. W. Marks, Clerk to the Lieutenancy; Canon W. W. C. Baker, late Chaplain to the 3rd V.B. Bedfordshire Regt., and afterwards to the 5th Bn. The Bedfordshire Regt.; the Mayor of Bedford (Mr. W. Nichols), the Mayor of Luton (Mr. Murray Barford), the Town Clerk of Luton (Mr. W. W. Smith), the Mayor of Dunstable (Mr. Hugh Woods), and the Town Clerk of Dunstable (Mr. C. C. S. Benning), together with numerous members of the Territorial Force Association and Justices of the Peace.

The flags which Lieut.-Colonel Clutton then handed over to the Lord Lieutenant had served the Battalion as its landmark in countries where buildings for headquarters were almost non-existent.

The original flag made for the Battalion went to Suvla Bay and the Peninsula, and, like the Battalion, suffered from exposure to weather and the attentions of the enemy. That was succeeded by a flag which was made to replace it and suffered a like fate. This flag was in Egypt and Palestine, and at the First and Second Battles of Gaza. The third flag went right through from the Third Battle of Gaza to Hereford Ridge. Then the final flag was made, and that proved to be the survivor of the family, finishing the war with the Battalion and returning to this country. The yellow triangle which is placed at the top of one frame was known as their fighting badge.

After the flags had been received the Lord Lieutenant presented the Territorial Decoration for twenty years'

Digitized by Google

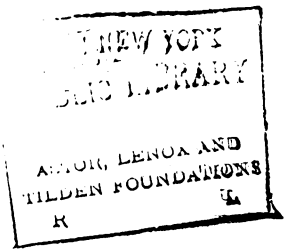


PL. XX.] INSPECTION 162ND INFANTRY BRIGADE. [*R* 258

COLCHESTER, 1928.

Brigadier W. J. N. Cooke-Collis, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., taking the salute of the 5th Bn. Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regt. (T.A.). Commanding Officer, Lieut.-Colonel C. H. Miskin, M.C.

Digitized by Google



Digitized by Google

service to Major J. Wellesley Taylor. This concluded the proceedings at the Shire Hall.

From the outset of the post-war reconstitution Territorial units have been equipped and organised on almost exactly the same lines as Regular units, and many new, and some magnificent, Headquarters and Drill Halls have been built all over the country. In this respect Bedfordshire has been particularly fortunate.

On 16th December 1922, the present Battalion Headquarters in The Lane, Ashburnham Road, Bedford, were opened by General Lord Horne, G.C.B., K.C.M.G., A.D.C.

A Company moved with Battalion Headquarters and still shares the buildings in The Lane.

B Company at Ampthill obtained their present Drill Hall in the middle of 1922, and the Woburn detachment had theirs completed by Christmas 1921.

For C Company a fine scheme, embracing a large and spacious set of buildings, which would be worthy headquarters for the three Territorial units in Luton, was commenced in Old Bedford Road.

Unfortunately, this scheme was not carried out in its entirety, and, to-day, this Company and its fellow units, the Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers, carry on in administrative and social buildings which are old, unsuitable, inadequate, and in some parts unsafe, while the aspect they present to the road is sufficient to drive all thoughts of enlistment from the minds of many young men.

Bearing in mind the fact that Luton is the largest town in the county, it is perhaps the least fortunate with regard to accommodation for its Territorial units.

D Company on the other hand, has reason to be well pleased, for in March 1927 new premises in Victoria Street, Dunstable, were officially opened, and on 29th May 1927 similar new Headquarters in West Street, Leighton Buzzard, were brought into use.

Without doubt the most difficult task of the post-war years, not only in Bedfordshire, but throughout the whole of the country, has been to find a means of overcoming the

Digitized by Google

natural post-war apathy, and an inexplicable resentment towards things military, which has been displayed in some cases. But gradually, partly through the passage of years, and partly through the return of men and matters to a normal attitude, things are improving. But it is largely through the particular efforts of serving officers, N.C.O.'s and men, that the majority of the post-war recruits have been obtained.

Month after month for years little expeditions, comprising sometimes an officer and two or three men, sometimes a big party, have spent, and still spend, in all the recruiting areas of the county, night after night in towns and villages, carrying out all kinds of honourable schemes for laying before the youth of Bedfordshire the facts concerning the Territorial Army, and, in the main, they have been successful, for the Battalion is stronger to-day than ever it has been since the war, and recruits are coming in more freely from most districts.

Incidents in connection with these recruiting expeditions have been sufficiently numerous to fill a volume of their own. On one occasion in Riseley, the promise of a cricket bat to a team in which they were interested, led to seven fine young men joining the Battalion.

One night in Toddington, half a dozen officers from all parts of Bedfordshire, and even outside it, and a like number of keen non-commissioned officers met for a well advertised meeting in that village, and found a lighted hall ready, but not a solitary person, man, woman or child, to whom to speak. And although they waited over an hour beyond the scheduled time, still no one came—until the caretaker arrived to lock up.

But to balance this, there is to be remembered a night at Olney, when every man-jack in the room—fifteen of them—including the town crier, who had previously " cried " the meeting, enlisted.

So it goes on, sometimes a big effort, yielding nothing but disappointment; sometimes a little three-man show yielding undreamed-of results. Such expeditions need

Digitized by Google

time and enthusiasm, but both are freely given by the officers and men who, after a day's work in office or factory, go out on these voluntary "extra duties," which they thoroughly enjoy. To them recruiting is almost as fascinating as a game; for they learn much of human nature, they grow to rate in patriotic values each town and village, and they know they are doing something worth while, something for England, something for Bedfordshire itself, with their spare time, and the joy of success is their adequate reward, and failure but an incentive to further effort.

The year 1925 was to create a further landmark in the history of the Battalion.

During the early months of that year a letter was sent round to Company Commanders, advising them that it was proposed to send the 162nd East Midland Infantry Brigade, in which the 5th Bedfords are the senior Battalion, on manœuvres with the Regular Army in the following September, instead of to the usual camp in August, and asking them to report with an estimate of the numbers of officers and men who would attend.

These returns were called for because the annual training or camp has always been held—at any rate since the war—during the first two weeks of August, and many of the men are employed in engineering firms, which usually close their works for August week, a custom which makes the normal camp period convenient to almost every one. By the alteration of the period of annual training to a date in September, a somewhat difficult situation arose, because a lot of the men would in any case be "standing off" for August week; and when they were wanted for manœuvres in September, their employers might not feel disposed to release them; and never, knowingly, has any man been asked to prejudice his civilian job in order to attend annual training, necessary though such attendance might be.

But the majority of the employers played up remarkably well, with the result that the Brigade was definitely detailed for the manœuvres, and when the Battalion

Digitized by Google

entrained on Sunday 13th September 1925 there was 85 per cent of its strength on parade.

Battalion Headquarters and Company Commanders were as follows :—

Commanding Officer—Lieut.-Colonel H. A. Wernher.
Adjutant—Capt. F. A. Sloan, M.C.
O.C., A Company—Lieut. (now Capt.) W. H. Ridgewell
O.C., B Company—Capt. C. A. F. Wingfield
O.C., C Company—Capt. Watson (attached)
O.C., D Company—Lieut. (now Capt.) G. W. Miskin.
Quartermaster—Capt. F. Corner, M.C.
Transport Officer—Lieut. G. M. Lamb.
R.S.M.—C. F. Walker, D.C.M.

On arrival at Bulford Station, the Battalion marched to Bulford Fields Camp, which proved to be the usual Brigade canvas camp.

During the first week (13th–20th September) a good deal of tactical training was carried out on the almost unlimited areas of the local part of Salisbury Plain, and a type of training was undertaken which the restrictions of time and space limited somewhat during the home training period.

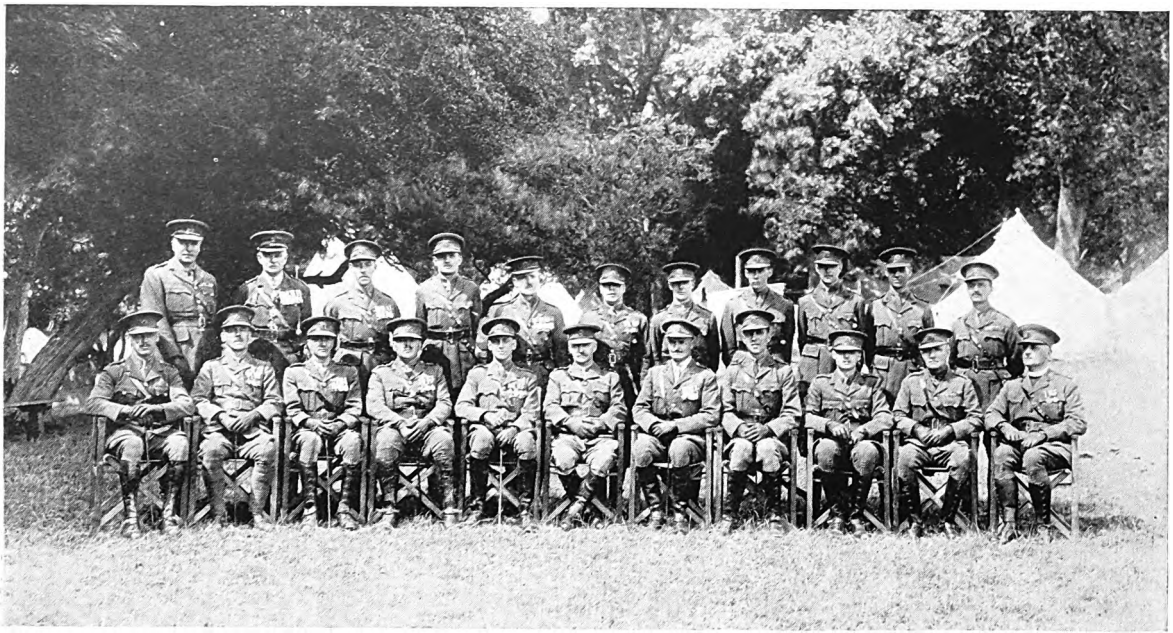
The weather during this week was pretty good ; but on Saturday, the 19th, a gale arose, and blew right across the Plain with nothing to stop it, until it hit the camp, which caught the full force of it. For hours on end the wind roared and the rain fell without ceasing. At 3 p.m. came the climax, when the huge Brigade N.A.A.F.I. marquee was blown down, despite the efforts of 200 troops to keep it from doing so, but they managed to hold it up long enough for the canteen stores to be removed, a job in which the troops excelled, but, nevertheless, the N.A.A.F.I. manager reported afterwards that nothing was missing, and so another virtue—honesty—was discovered in the Territorial.

Most of the young soldiers had their first issue of S.R.D. (rum) that night—and they needed it.

Many old Volunteers will remember no doubt that a similar gale arose and similar misfortunes befel the 3rd

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google



PL. XXI.] [*S* 263

OFFICERS 5TH BATTALION BEDFORDSHIRE AND HERTFORDSHIRE REGIMENT (T.A.).

ARUNDEL PARK CAMP, 1929.

Front Row (*Seated*): Capt. R. D. P. Yates, Capt. A. Waldren, Capt. W. H. Ridgewell, M.B.E., Capt. and Adjt. G. A. Anstee, M.C., Lieut-Col. C. H. Miskin, M.C. (Commanding Officer), General the Earl of Cavan, K.P., G.C.B., G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O., G.B.E. (Colonel of the Regt.), Major C. A. F. Wingfield (Second-in-Command), Capt. G. W. Miskin, Capt. the Hon. L. O. Russell, Lieut.-Col. E. W. Brighten, C.M.G., D.S.O., T.D. (O.C., 2nd Battalion), the Rev. L. W. Wright (Chaplain to Battalion). *Back Row* (*Standing*): Major-General Sir Torquhil Matheson, K.C.B., C.M.G., (G.O.C., 54th Division), Colonel Sir Hereward Wake, Bart., C.M.G., D.S.O. (Brigade Commander), Major J. S. Davenport, M.C. (O.C. Depot, and Brigade Major), 2nd-Lieut. W. T. Lane, Lieut. and Qmr. A. Milton, M.C., D.C.M., Lieut. H. H. Revill, M.C., Lieut. S. T. Smith, 2nd-Lieut. G. N. Crowther, 2nd-Lieut. C. B. Blinco, 2nd-Lieut. J. R. Harper, Brevet Lieut.-Col. R. T. Holland, D.S.O., M.C., R.A. (G.S.O.2, 54th Division).

Digitized by Google

V.B. Bedfordshire Regt. when the Bedfordshire Volunteer Infantry Brigade was in camp at Shorncliffe in 1900.

Sunday, the 20th, was almost as bad, though not quite so windy, and on this day orders for the move into manœuvres came out, and the opposing forces were found to be as follows :—

Eastern Force (*Mercia*)

Commanded by Lieut.-General Sir Phillip Chetwode, G.O.C.-in-C., Aldershot Command.

Consisting of :—One cavalry brigade, three regular infantry divisions, one battalion of tanks of three companies, three Army co-operation air squadrons, one fighting squadron and one bombing squadron.

Western Force (*Wessex*)

Commanded by General Sir Alexander Godley, G.O.C.-in-C., Southern Command.

Consisting of :—One cavalry division of two cavalry brigades, one regular infantry division, one Territorial infantry brigade (162nd East Midland), one battalion of tanks of two companies, one armoured car company, one Army co-operation air squadron with an extra flight attached, one fighting squadron and one bombing squadron.

The Battalion was to bivouac in Tidworth Park on Monday the 21st and move towards Grateley on Tuesday the 22nd.

Possibly owing to weather which still remained vile, the bivouac in Tidworth Park was cut out, but the Bedfords were not to clear the line of Beacon Hill (about two miles from the camp) before 2 a.m. on Tuesday.

An early start was indicated, and at 5.15 a.m. a quiet, yet eager, Battalion paraded in the dark ready for " war."

The Battalion was ordered to act as advanced guard to the Brigade (162nd East Midland Brigade, commanded by Colonel John Brown, C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O., T.D. ; himself a Territorial) and A Company was detailed to perform a similar function for the Battalion.

Digitized by Google

No sooner had the advanced guard reached Beacon Hill than the fine penetrating drizzle peculiar to Salisbury Plain descended and kept on descending for the rest of that day, but no one minded; and, slowly but surely, as the march towards Grateley continued, every one got wet through, a condition in which they remained more or less continuously for three days and nights. But the more sodden their clothing became the more cheerful did the Bedfords seem to be; and these men, fresh from office, factory and shop, laden with all the paraphernalia of war, unhardened, wearing unaccustomed Army boots and with softened skins, especially where the pack straps rubbed, sang as they marched.

In their ranks were quite a hundred young soldiers, only enlisted that year, whose total military training, before arrival in Bulford Fields Camp, averaged some twenty-five hours. One Company alone had thirty-five such lads in its ranks, yet not one of them fell out; such was the magnificent spirit which animated the whole Battalion.

It should be remembered, too, that the Regular Army had been steadily training for several weeks in preparation for these manœuvres, in which the 162nd Brigade was to perform the same work as a Regular Brigade.

Quarley Farm, near the village of Quarley, proved to be the end of that first march, and A Company immediately established a line of outposts extending along three-quarters of a mile of front, while the remainder of the Battalion took shelter and stock of things.

This farm will always be called "Mud Farm" by the troops, and it resembled Flanders in this familiar respect. The efforts of the Battalion cooks to hide the glare of their cooker fires and tell-tale smoke from possible "enemy" aeroplanes were most conscientious, but they were rather negatived, owing to the fact that each cooker was surrounded by rain drenched troops trying to get dry—while the rain still descended upon them.

At 5 p.m. A Company was relieved by B Company, and

Digitized by Google

as the Battalion was told it would not be " called " until 6 a.m. the next morning, arrangements were made to settle the men comfortably for the night in the spacious barns of the farm ; and, after various false alarms and a rum issue, the Battalion turned in about 10 p.m.

At 1 a.m. (Wednesday the 23rd) urgent orders were received to clear the farm by 2.50 a.m. and march *viâ* Manxton–Abbott's Ann to Anna Valley.

Sleepy Company Commanders gathered round a candle-lit bench, and studied the route, while the Commanding Officer and Adjutant prepared orders for the move.

The men were roused, and with ever-ready humour, found amusement in the situation, and by 2.50 a.m., the Battalion was on the march again.

And it rained—still rained—while over rutted lanes, and water-logged bye-roads the men plodded on, through a night so black that the outer flanks time and again walked into ditches and stumbled over gulleys and stones.

Just as dawn broke Anna Valley was reached, and C and D Companies were sent out to hold the bridgeheads of the River Anton from Upper Clatford to the south side of Bury Hill. They were supported by the Machine Gun Section, a Field Battery, and a Pack Battery ; while A and B Companies were stowed away in the village school.

The 5th Bedfords will always be grateful to the inhabitants of Anna Valley, who asked to be allowed to make tea for the men, as soon as they found that troops were in the village.

One good woman made three great jugs of tea and cut up every loaf she had, and even a huge cake. She gave what she had to the wearied men, and steadfastly refused any kind of payment.

The generous behaviour of the people of this village was especially appreciated, when, as the hours rolled on, the Battalion transport with the breakfasts on board, failed to arrive. But at 2 p.m. it did put in an appearance, having, apparently, been side-tracked, mis-directed, and finally

Digitized by Google

left to its own devices by an officer, whose name—fortunately—is forgotten.

Nothing exciting happened to C and D Companies in the "line," except that a certain handsome young corporal claimed to have discovered a cousin in this out-of-the-way little village—anyhow that was his excuse when he was found at about 7.30 a.m. in earnest conversation over a garden fence with a very pretty girl.

"Something having happened somewhere else," which, normally, is the average amount of information to reach the private soldier, the Battalion was ordered at 3 p.m. to proceed to Kimpton (approximately nine miles north-west of Anna Valley), which was reached without mishap about 7 p.m.

A Company was immediately instructed to take up an outpost line for the night, stretching from the Salisbury–Andover Road inclusive, where they joined up with the 1st Hertfordshires, to the right flank of the 8th Infantry Brigade, some two miles north.

The Officer Commanding A Company (Capt. W. H. Ridgewell), and his Second-in-Command (Lieut. R. D. Peel Yates) were rather concerned as to how they could reconnoitre the frontage before placing the troops; but two innocent looking push-bicycles were borrowed and provided means of locomotion. They remained in use throughout the night. All roads and tracks, and their junctions, were guarded by strong posts, and kept constantly in touch by patrols.

Thus the night passed, and nothing of importance happened, though many rumours circulated, strongest of which was that an "enemy" cavalry regiment had been stopped, trying to break through some miles south of the right flank.

Throughout this long night the men, after a hard day and after marching nearly all the previous night and also the day before that, were still as keen as mustard and remarkably fresh.

A Company was relieved at 6 a.m., and marched to a big farm at the west end of Kimpton village, where the

Digitized by Google

remainder of the Battalion were just beginning to stir, after a reasonably good night's rest, ready to take up fresh positions.

Receiving orders to breakfast in this farm, and then to march independently to a point (" The Haystacks ") on the Great Shoddesden–Perham Down Camp Road, at 8 a.m. the Company Commander looked for somewhere to put his men for their meal.

He espied a large, dry barn, with a good deal of clean-looking litter on the floor. This appeared ideal for his purpose, and the men were marched in.

As British Tommies always do, the men half stripped and began to wash and shave, and bathe their feet, in various troughs and buckets in the farmyard, leaving their tunics and other garments in the barn on the litter.

Ablutions duly executed, they returned to the barn, dressed and sat down to a substantial breakfast.

Alas ! They were but half way through this well-earned meal when C.S.M. Poulter appeared at the Company Office, which was in a cart hovel, and reported that the men all complained of being verminous ; their clothing, he said, was infested and their skins masses of red marks.

Visions of similar events on active service during the war, mingled also with the visions of hosts of letters later on from the indignant mothers of his younger soldiers, caused Capt. Ridgewell a bad five minutes.

Luckily it was discovered in the now bright daylight that the barn was normally a huge chicken roosting house—and the mystery was solved.

The men changed their quarters, and soon all was reported quiet, the " visitors " having apparently lost the desire to live when away from their natural victims.

" The Haystacks " position was duly reached and proved to be Battalion Headquarters.

On this day (Thursday 24th September) the rain cleared, and the sun shone for a few blessed hours, transforming the whole aspect of the vast " battlefield " and drying thousands of rain soaked troops.

Digitized by Google

Until 4 p.m. the Battalion was distributed as follows :—

B and D Companies in the " line," from a bend in the road midway between the sixth and seventh milestones on the Ludgershall–Weyhill Road, due south to the narrow road, 300 yards south of Little Shoddesden, the " line " being about 200 yards to the east of this village ; D Company were on the right.

C Company were in support in Little Shoddesden, while the Machine Guns and Pack Battery (Light Artillery) were on a high ridge running, approximately, from just behind Little Shoddesden, north to Point 361 on the third-class road going from Great Shoddesden north to join the Ludgershall–Weyhill Road.

A Company and Battalion Headquarters were, as previously mentioned, at " The Haystacks."

Up to now the Territorial Brigade had been denied a sight of the " enemy," but at 4 p.m. there were unmistakable signs that Appleshaw, about a mile to the east of our forward companies, was full of them.

Orders were then issued for the 162nd Brigade to attack along its whole front.

The order had an extraordinary effect on the men. Up to that moment they had been keen and cheerful, but now they seethed with excitement, for after three days they were actually to see who it was they had marched and watched for since Tuesday morning.

Orders for the advance were soon issued, and D Company Commander found himself compelled to go through a very deep wood, with only his compass to help him. To this day he is profoundly grateful, and not a little surprised, that he came out the other side almost exactly where he intended.

Just before the Battalion moved off, a young lance-corporal was observed with his eyes tightly shut and his lips moving, as in prayer. Asked what he was praying about, he replied :

" I wasn't. I was just repeating the three kinds of fire orders."

Digitized by Google

In the meantime A Company had been moved up to the left of the Battalion line, with orders to watch a level-crossing and also to enfilade the "enemy," if he should issue from the area of Redenham House, and attempt to cross the railway.

No sooner had this Company reached its position than the "enemy" did issue—a whole Battalion of him, and things looked like getting warm; a group of foreign attachés who were watching began to show signs of alarm, the pack batteries pounded, the artillery roared, aeroplanes swooped down firing at the troops on the ground, tanks lumbered along, and at last the two sides were getting to grips, when—"Cease Fire!" The call rolled right along the battle front, and the manœuvres were over, the decisive battle having been fought about Quarley Hill, some four miles south of the Bedfords.

The Battalion was re-formed and marched back to Kimpton, where they had tea on the village green, after which, back some fifteen weary miles, punctuated by endless blocks and stoppages, caused by the masses of troops and transport on the roads, to Bulford Camp, which was reached just after midnight, to wait, as one wit remarked: "For the medal, the ribbon of which would be a dreamy shade of blue, with two bars, both wet, attached."

During the three days of the manœuvres it was estimated that as a Battalion, the men had marched fifty miles, while as companies or platoons the figure was about seventy miles. They had averaged some four hours' sleep during the whole period, and they had been wet through for two days and nights, but they had stuck it; and, side by side with Regular units, had done all that had been asked of them.

By their efficiency, pluck and cheerfulness, they had justified the post-war Territorial Army, which they had been chosen to represent.

As the outcome of those manœuvres the Territorial Infantry Brigade which took part in them received high

Digitized by Google

praise from the Secretary of State for War, Sir Laming Worthington Evans, and from the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, General The Earl of Cavan, K.P., G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O., K.C.B.

The next great honour came with the visit of H.R.H. The Prince of Wales to Luton in 1926, and Wednesday 17th November, will always remain a red-letter day in the rather quiet post-war life of the Battalion. Indeed, it is a memorable day in the history of the Regiment, for then it was that H.R.H. The Prince of Wales visited Luton to present new colours to the 2nd Battalion, who had come up from Dover to receive them.

To the 5th Battalion was assigned the distinction of providing a Guard of Honour to meet the Prince.

So that the guard should be as representative as possible of the whole Battalion and the county, each Company detailed a number of N.C.O.'s and men, and their selection was largely determined by the ever-present bogey of leave from civil employment for a full day in mid-week.

But again, as many times during the past, the employers of the men chosen gave every assistance, and the complement of the guard was soon obtained.

The officers selected were :—

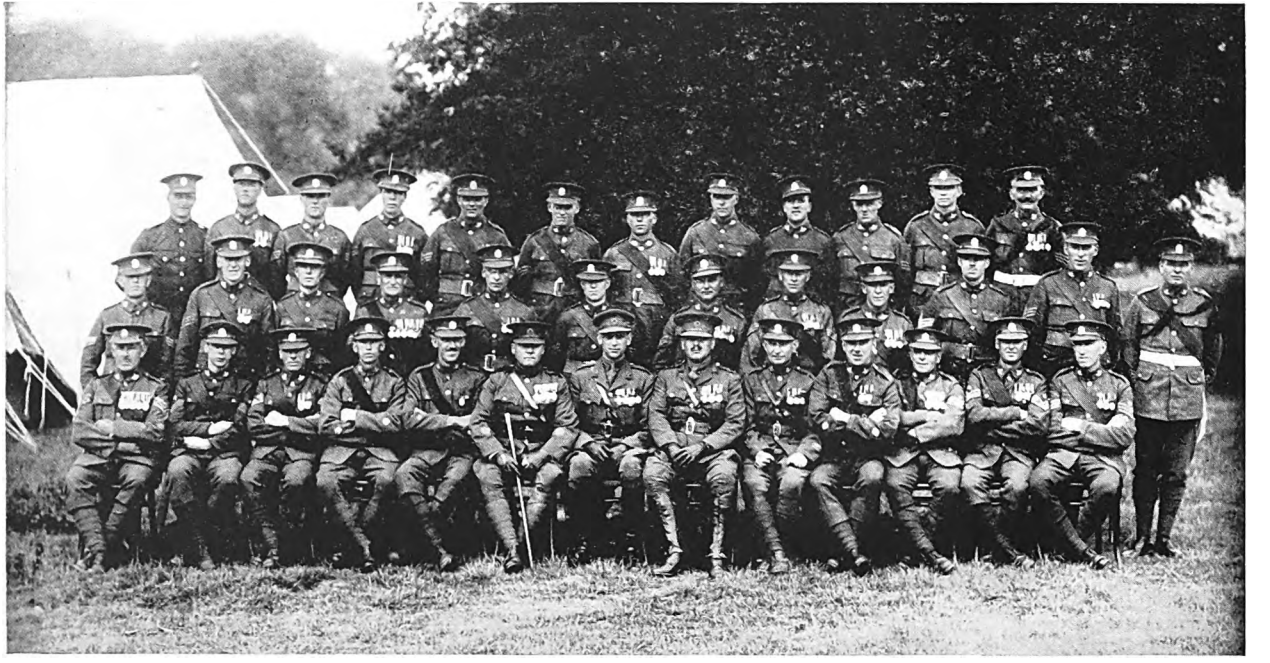
Capt. W. H. Ridgewell, M.B.E. (in command)
Lieut. C. A. Mouse
2nd-Lieut. L. I. Barford (King's Colour),

the total strength of the guard being 100 Officers, Warrant Officers, N.C.O.'s and men, with the addition of the Regimental Band, under Bandmaster W. Goodger.

The Colour Escort consisted of R.Q.M.S. (now Lieutenant and Quartermaster) A. Milton, M.C., D.C.M. ; C.Q.M.S. S. Perkins and C.Q.M.S. (now R.Q.M.S.) A. E. Field.

A few hasty rehearsals were held in the various Company Drill Halls by the men, during which the Adjutant, Capt. F. A. Sloan, M.C., acted as a sort of flying (instruction) column, these special drills being so arranged that he could visit two or three Drill Halls in one evening. A final rehearsal on Sunday 14th November at Bedford, the

Digitized by Google



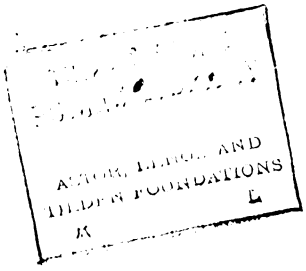
PL. XXII.] [*S* 270

5TH BATTALION BEDFORDSHIRE AND HERTFORDSHIRE REGIMENT (T.A.), 1929.

SERGEANTS' MESS.

Back Row: Sergts. Smith, Tompkins, Anderson, Watson, Howard, Fisher, Carter, Butterfield, Willis, Sherwood, Dunham, Martin. *Centre*: Sergts. Adams, Ray, Gardner, Radley, O'Bryan, Thorogood, Burton, Hamblin, Huckle, Jefferies, Diemer, Luff. *Sitting*: Sergt. Wheeler, C.Q.M.S. Blanchard, Sergt. Peacock, C.S.M. Morgan, C.S.M. Poulter, R.S.M. Crouch, Lieut.-Col. C. H. Miskin, M.C., Capt. Anstee, R.Q.M.S. Field, C.S.M. Wood, C.Q.M.S. Thurley, C.Q.M.S. Coles, C.Q.M.S. Rump.

Digitized by Google



Digitized by Google

only one at which the guard paraded as a whole, and then the Prince's Guard gathered from all quarters of Bedfordshire at the Luton Drill Hall, early on the morning of the 17th.

During the short march along Old Bedford Road and Station Road to their position outside the L.M.S. Station, the troops, out of the corners of their eyes, saw that Luton was *en fête* that day.

Station Road was lined with thousands of school children, who gave a kind of experimental wave of their flags and a trial cheer as the men passed.

On reaching the appointed spot the guard was placed in the centre of the road, facing the station, and with its right flank just under the narrow footbridge that connects Midland Road with Bute Street.

Punctually the Royal train arrived, and the Prince appeared through the little door at the bottom of the footbridge steps.

A sharp command, the flash of bayonets, the crashing out of the band, and the stately dipping of the King's Colour to the King's son—that was the Royal Salute.

More commands, the proud uplift of the Colour, and then the inspection, during which the Prince questioned several men with regard to their service, and also expressed to the Commander of the Guard his pleasure in observing so many men with war service still serving.

A few more remarks and a question or two, which indicated the Prince's satisfaction with his guard, then another salute as he entered his car and it was over.

Not so, however, for those thousands of school children who lined Station Road, for as the Prince rode slowly through on his way to the football ground, where the 2nd Battalion awaited him, their moment had come, and they showed what juvenile cheers could be, and with their myriads of flags all a-wave, they started a welcome which the crowds in the densely populated streets took up and passed on and on until it reached the packed thousands surrounding the football ground, who roared cheer after

Digitized by Google

cheer, such as that place had never heard before—used though it was to them—as the Prince arrived. In fact, so really roused with enthusiasm was Luton that day that they cheered each order of the Officer Commanding the 2nd Battalion, much to that officer's embarrassment, for he had to get out his words of command while the crowds took breath.

What a pity such splendid patriotism does not find more practical expression, by the filling of the ranks of the Territorial Army in Bedfordshire in general, and Luton in particular, by the young men who abound.

That this is the Prince's wish is proved by his speech at the luncheon in the Assembly Hall that day, in the course of which he said :—

> " I was very pleased to see the Guard of Honour of the 5th Battalion at the station.
>
> " May their visit, and the visit of the 2nd Battalion remind people in the counties that, although we are not looking out for any more wars, it has never done anybody any harm to do a little peace-time soldiering."

Since the visit of the Prince of Wales, no outstanding event has occurred, though an abundance of pleasant memories remain—memories of happy camps, of continued increase in efficiency, the gradual gain in numbers of the Battalion, the dozens of jolly evenings spent at many social functions, which during the winter non-training season, do so much to foster that great power—comradeship —which is the lifeblood of the Territorial Army, and certainly of the 5th Bedfords during the régime of its present popular Commanding Officer, Lieut.-Colonel C. H. Miskin, M.C.

And here we will leave them, confident that they will overcome their remaining problems, for the most difficult years have passed, and the same qualities of devotion, determination and patience which characterised all ranks of the 5th Bedfords during the Great War still live in the " Yellow Devils " of to-day.

Digitized by Google

INDEX TO APPENDICES

		Page
I.	Commanding Officers	274
II.	Adjutants	274
III.	Numbers Passed Through Battalion During War, Summary	274
IV.	Casualties Sustained, Summary	275
V.	Great War, Summary	275
VI.	Honours and Awards, Summary	275
VII.	Roll of Officers on Mobilisation	276
VIII.	Roll of Officers who Served During the War	276
IX.	Roll of Officers and Other Ranks Killed in Action, or Died of Wounds or Disease	279
X.	Roll of Officers and Other Ranks Missing	293
XI.	Honours and Awards in Detail	294
XII.	Roll of Officers, 1930	297
XIII.	Organisation and Distribution, 1930	297
XIV.	Annual Trainings Since the War	298

Digitized by Google

APPENDIX I.

COMMANDING OFFICERS, 1860–1930.

Lieut.-Colonel The Hon. F. C. Hastings Russell, M.P.[1]	21st	August	1860	to	9th	January	1872
Lieut.-Colonel J. T. Green		January	1872	to	1st	November	1895
Lieut.-Colonel E. R. Green, V.D.	2nd	November	1895	to	2nd	December	1902
Lieut.-Colonel A. Lingard Green, D.S.O., V.D.	3rd	December	1902	to	23rd	December	1904
Lieut.-Colonel Spenser Jackson, T.D., D.L.[2]	24th	December	1904	to	19th	January	1912
Lieut.-Colonel F. N. Butler, T.D.	20th	January	1912	to	25th	January	1915
Lieut.-Colonel E. W. Brighten, C.M.G., D.S.O., T.D.	25th	January	1915	to	15th	February	1920
Lieut.-Colonel J. Clutton, T.D.	16th	February	1920	to	7th	November	1923
Major R. Forrest, M.B.E., T.D. (acting)	7th	November	1923	to	20th	March	1924
Lieut.-Colonel Sir H. A. Wernher, K.C.V.O.	20th	March	1924	to	20th	March	1928
Lieut.-Col. C. H. Miskin, M.C.	20th	March	1928				

APPENDIX II.

ADJUTANTS (POST-WAR).

Captain and Brevet-Major R. Le Huquet	4th	March	1920	to	1st	February	1923
Captain F. A. Sloan, M.C.	1st	February	1923	to	1st	February	1927
Captain G. A. Anstee, M.C.	1st	February	1927				

APPENDIX III.

WAR PERIOD.—NUMBERS WHO PASSED THROUGH THE BATTALION FROM DATE OF LEAVING THE UNITED KINGDOM 26TH JULY 1915 INCLUSIVE TO 5TH DECEMBER 1918, INCLUSIVE.

Original Battalion	28 Officers	...	750	Other Ranks
Numbers of Reinforcements	231 Officers	...	4993	Other Ranks
TOTAL	259		5743	

[1] Afterwards Ninth Duke of Bedford, Hon. Colonel 1st Administrative Battalion Bedfordshire Volunteer Rifles, 26th June 1872.
[2] Hon. Colonel The Fifth Battalion The Bedfordshire Regiment 7th February 1912.

Digitized by Google

APPENDIX IV.

TOTAL CASUALTIES SUSTAINED.

Theatre.	Killed. Officers.	Killed. Other Ranks.	Wounded. Officers.	Wounded. Other Ranks.	Missing. Officers.	Missing. Other Ranks.	Prisoners. Officers.	Prisoners. Other Ranks.	Sick. Officers.	Sick. Other Ranks.
GALLIPOLI.—From date of leaving U.K. to arrival in Alexandria, Dec. 1915	8[1]	63[2]	11	276	—	—	—	1	18	533
EGYPT.—From disembarkation Alexandria to 25th March 1917 ...	—	2[4]	—	3	—	—	—	—	34	916
PALESTINE.—26th March 1917, to 5th December 1918	9[5]	137[6]	18	381	—	2	1[7]	9[8]	64	2,676
	17	202	29	660	—	2	1	10	116	4,125

[1] Officers include 2 death accepted, and 1 died of wounds.
[2] Other Ranks include 24 died of wounds and 1 accidentally drowned.
[3] 1 since repatriated.
[4] Includes 1 died of wounds.
[5] Officers include 4 died of wounds and 1 died of wounds as Prisoner of War.
[6] Other Ranks include 24 died of wounds and 1 accidentally drowned.
[7] Since repatriated.
[8] Other Ranks, 6 since repatriated.

APPENDIX V.

GREAT WAR, 1914–1918, SUMMARY.

Embarked at Devonport on 26th July 1915.
Disembarked at Suvla on 13th August 1915.

	Officers.	*Other Ranks.*
Strength	28	750
Reinforcements received during the course of the War	231	4,993
Total ...	259	5,743

	Officers.	*Other Rks.*
Killed in Action or died of wounds or disease	20	266
Wounded	29	660

APPENDIX VI.

HONOURS AND AWARDS—SUMMARY.

Conferred on individuals during the War :—		
The Victoria Cross	1	
C.M.G.	1	
O.B.E.	2	
D.S.O.	3	
M.C.	13	and 2 Bars.
D.C.M.	11	
M.M.	48	and 1 Bar.
Foreign Decorations	4	
Mentioned in Despatches	31	
Conferred on individuals since the War :—		
M.B.E.	1	
T.D. (Post-War)	5	
T.E. Medal Post-War	22	

Digitized by Google

APPENDIX VII.

ROLL OF OFFICERS ON MOBILISATION, AUGUST, 1914

Lieut.-Colonel F. N. Butler
Major E. W. Brighten
Major J. Clutton
Capt. C. H. F. Metcalfe
Capt. J. W. Taylor
Capt. J. E. Hill
Capt. W. K. Meakin
Lieut. G. J. Norris
Lieut. R. L. Webb
Lieut. J. K. Batten
Lieut. R. M. Smythe
Lieut. B. C. Cumberland
Lieut. R. Forrest
2nd-Lieut. R. A. Dunstan
2nd-Lieut. C. T. Baker
2nd-Lieut. E. V. Andreini
2nd-Lieut. C. R. James
2nd-Lieut. C. H. Miskin
2nd-Lieut. C. R. Lydekker
2nd-Lieut. W. S. Chirnside
2nd-Lieut. F. S. Shoosmith
2nd-Lieut. T. A. Franklin
2nd-Lieut. F. W. Ballance
2nd-Lieut. R. O. Clark
2nd-Lieut. F. B. Hobbs
2nd-Lieut. G. N. Hobbs

Adjutant: Capt. H. Younghusband
Quartermaster: Hon. Lieut. E. Kiddle
Medical Officer: Capt. J. B. McBride, R.A.M.C. (T.F.)
Chaplain: Rev. W. W. C. Baker, M.A.

APPENDIX VIII.

ROLL OF OFFICERS WHO PROCEEDED OVERSEAS WITH THE BATTALION.

EMBARKED AT DEVONPORT ON 26–7–15
DISEMBARKED AT SUVLA BAY, GALLIPOLI ON 11–8–15

Lieut.-Colonel E. W. Brighten
Capt. J. E. Hill
Capt. W. K. Meakin
Capt. R. M. Smythe
Capt. B. C. Cumberland
Capt. R. Forrest
Capt. C. T. Baker
Capt. E. V. Andreini
Capt. E. T. Maier
Lieut. C. R. James
Lieut. C. R. Lydekker
Lieut. W. S. Chirnside
Lieut. F. S. Shoosmith
Lieut. R. O. Clarke
Lieut. F. W. Ballance
Lieut. F. B. Hobbs
Lieut. F. W. H. Nicholas
Lieut. C. R. Day
2nd-Lieut. J. T. Yarde
2nd-Lieut. D. Rising
2nd-Lieut. P. R. Chaundler
2nd-Lieut. R. D. J. Brighten
2nd-Lieut. L. J. Hunter
2nd-Lieut. E. L. Rawlins
2nd-Lieut. H. E. Woodhouse
2nd-Lieut. H. S. Toogood
Capt. & Adjutant: H. Younghusband
Lieut. & Quartermaster: G. O. Lydekker
Medical Officer: Lieut. F. C. Kempson, R.A.M.C.

ROLL OF OFFICERS WHO SERVED WITH THE BATTALION DURING THE WAR, 1914–1918, GIVING DATE OF FIRST POSTING.

Rank and Name.	*Corps.*	*Posted.*
Major Wolfe, C. H.	4th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	17–3–16
Major Clutton, J.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	13–3–16
Major Dayrell, G. M. de L.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	3–9–16
Major Owens, F. G.	King's Liverpool Regt. ...	24–12–17
Capt. Miskin, C. H.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	22–1–16
Capt. Tickler, W. M.	Cheshire Regt.	19–12–16
Capt. Mellows, C.	Huntingdonshire Cyclists ...	25–1–18
Capt. Mills, S. D.	Bedfordshire Regt. ...	22–2–18
Capt. Casey, E. H.	West Riding Regt.	31–3–18
Capt. Bullick, A.	Royal Warwickshire Regt....	5–9–18
Capt. Buckton, F. E.	Cheshire Regt.	9–12–18
Capt. Derry, R. M.	Monmouthshire Regt. ...	15–12–18

Digitized by Google

Rank and Name	*Corps.*	*Posted.*
Lieut. Perkins, N. H....	3rd Essex Regt.	10–9–15
Lieut. Plummer, R. M.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	21–9–15
Lieut. Cronin, H. W.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	21–9–15
Lieut. Wilkins, H. O. D.	Bedfordshire Regt. ...	17–3–16
Lieut. Brewer, C. H.	Bedfordshire Regt. ...	17–3–16
Lieut. Stratford, A. H.	Bedfordshire Regt. ...	23–3–16
Lieut. Taylor, G. R.	4th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	11–4–16
Lieut. Bruhl, H. G. P.	Army Service Corps ...	21–9–17
Lieut. Berkeley, L. G. F.	Bedfordshire Regt. ...	31–3–18
Lieut. Poole, H.	Royal Dublin Fusiliers ...	31–3–18
Lieut. Spurgeon, D. F. P.	London Regt.	31–3–18
Lieut. Stanton, C. R.	Rifle Brigade	22–9–18
Lieut. Hanford, V. G.	Cheshire Regt.	1–10–18
Lieut. Kneafsey, J. J.	Royal West Kent Regt. ...	11–12–18
Lieut. Hodgson, C.	Royal West Kent Regt. ...	13–12–18
Lieut. Parkyn, R. R.	Royal West Kent Regt. ...	9–12–18
Lieut. Downie, J. C.	Middlesex Regt.	9–12–18
Lieut. Conway, A. J.	Cheshire Regt.	10–12–18
Lieut. Piper, R. M. E.	Norfolk Regt.	2–2–19
Lieut. Carmichael, H. N.	West Yorkshire Regt. ...	9–1–19
Lieut. Harrison, H. W.	Yorks and Lancs Regt. ...	10–1–19
Lieut. Chandler, A. J.	Royal West Kent Regt. ...	14–1–19
2nd-Lieut. New, L. P.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	21–9–15
2nd-Lieut. Orlebar, A. H.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	21–9–15
2nd-Lieut. Barford, G. C.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	21–9–15
2nd-Lieut. Hartley, A. G.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	21–9–15
2nd-Lieut. Hill, W. P.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	21–9–15
2nd-Lieut. Campbell, E. R. ...	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	21–9–15
2nd-Lieut. Smythe, B. W.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	21–9–15
2nd-Lieut. Taitt, N. R., ...	Bedfordshire Regt. ...	7–10–15
2nd-Lieut. Gate, L. C. T.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	7–10–15
2nd-Lieut. Jolowicz, H. F. ...	Bedfordshire Regt. ...	7–10–15
2nd-Lieut. Wodehouse, C. R. ...	Bedfordshire Regt. ...	7–10–15
2nd-Lieut. Wilkin, H.	Royal West Kent Regt. ...	19–10–15
2nd-Lieut. Wright, H. W.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	19–10–15
2nd-Lieut. Boyd, R. C.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	21–10–15
2nd-Lieut. Kelley, C.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	19–10–15
2nd-Lieut. Bass, R. E.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	—
2nd-Lieut. Draper, C. B.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	10–12–15
2nd-Lieut. Gurney, F. J. W. ...	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	27–12–15
2nd-Lieut. Caton, E. S.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	20–1–16
2nd-Lieut. Theobald, H. H. ...	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	20–1–16
2nd-Lieut. Ingram, C. G. F. ...	9th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	29–2–16
2nd-Lieut. Dawson, J. L.	Bedfordshire Regt. ...	29–2–16
2nd-Lieut. Taylor, L. E.	Bedfordshire Regt. ...	29–2–16
2nd-Lieut. Douglas, C. V.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	29–2–16
2nd-Lieut. Wodehouse, E. C. B. ...	Bedfordshire Regt. ...	10–3–16
2nd-Lieut. Armstrong, H. S. ...	4th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	17–3–16
2nd-Lieut. Shaw, W. A.	Bedfordshire Regt. ...	23–3–16
2nd-Lieut. Wood, R.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	29–5–16
2nd-Lieut. Sperling, H. H. ...	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	13–6–16
2nd-Lieut. Coate, T. A. J.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	25–6–16
2nd-Lieut. Mess, A. H.	10th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	15–7–16
2nd-Lieut. Ferguson, R. G. ...	4th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	26–7–16
2nd-Lieut. Beckett, E.	Bedfordshire Regt. ...	26–7–16
2nd-Lieut. Smith, R. H.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	1–12–16
2nd-Lieut. Strugnell, M. A. ...	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	1–12–16
2nd-Lieut. Buck, C. F.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	1–12–16
2nd-Lieut. Waterton, J. E. M. C. P. A.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	1–12–16
2nd-Lieut. Mander, A. J.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	1–12–16
2nd-Lieut. Smith, H. W. E. ...	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	1–12–16
2nd-Lieut. Hucklesby, A. G. ...	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	1–12–16
2nd-Lieut. Keith, T. N.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	18–12–16
2nd-Lieut. Brereton, L. L.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt. ...	3–2–17

Digitized by Google

Rank and Name	*Corps.*	*Posted.*
2nd-Lieut. Dennis, E. E.	Royal Berkshire Regt.	13-3-17
2nd-Lieut. Phillips, E. A.	Royal Berkshire Regt.	13-3-17
2nd-Lieut. Pinchin, G. H.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt.	14-8-17
2nd-Lieut. Mayers, W. H.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt.	14-8-17
2nd-Lieut. Sowden P. J.	Bedfordshire Regt.	14-8-17
2nd-Lieut. Otter, R. E.	Bedfordshire Regt.	21-8-17
2nd-Lieut. Watt, K. M.	3rd Bedfordshire Regt.	21-8-17
2nd-Lieut. Reynolds, J. R.	Bedfordshire Regt.	21-8-17
2nd-Lieut. Randle, E. P.	Bedfordshire Regt.	21-8-17
2nd-Lieut. Damon, C. A. I.	Gloucester Regt.	19-12-17
2nd-Lieut. Geoghegan, P.	Gloucester Regt.	14-10-17
2nd-Lieut. George, S. E.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt.	20-12-17
2nd-Lieut. Gooderham, F.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt.	20-12-17
2nd-Lieut. Jarvis, A. D.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt.	20-12-17
2nd-Lieut. Sawyer, R. S.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt.	14-12-17
2nd-Lieut. Sharman, R. C.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt.	2-1-18
2nd-Lieut. Wilson, R. C.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt.	2-1-18
2nd-Lieut. Derby, A. G.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt.	2-1-18
2nd-Lieut. Ricketts, K. H.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt.	16-1-18
2nd-Lieut. Rose, H. E.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt.	2-1-18
2nd-Lieut. Choat, J. A.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt.	2-1-18
2nd-Lieut. Strong, E. J.	Devonshire Regt.	4-4-18
2nd-Lieut. Dawes, H. B.	Devonshire Regt.	4-4-18
2nd-Lieut. Strong, L. W.	Devonshire Regt.	4-4-18
2nd-Lieut. Robinson, S. L.	Bedfordshire Regt.	4-4-18
2nd-Lieut. Horwood, S. C.	Bedfordshire Regt.	4-4-18
2nd-Lieut. Moulton, E. W.	Bedfordshire Regt.	4-4-18
2nd-Lieut. Symons, W. R.	Devonshire Regt.	7-4-18
2nd-Lieut. King, H. V.	Devonshire Regt.	7-4-18
2nd-Lieut. Lincoln, A. W.	1/5th Bedfordshire Regt.	—
2nd-Lieut. Game, W. E.	Suffolk Regt.	7-4-18
2nd-Lieut. Duncan, S.	Rifle Brigade	2-8-18
2nd-Lieut. Hope, A.	Rifle Brigade	10-8-18
2nd-Lieut. Hepburn, A.	Rifle Brigade	10-8-18
2nd-Lieut. Hughes, H. S.	Royal Dublin Fusiliers	14-8-18
2nd-Lieut. Hall, H. D.	London Regt.	14-8-18
2nd-Lieut. Dobbins, W.	Cheshire Regt.	5-9-18
2nd-Lieut. Cheetham, G. R.	Royal Welch Fusiliers	5-9-18
2nd-Lieut. Coppen, A.	Middlesex Regt.	10-9-18
2nd-Lieut. Browne, R. J.	Middlesex Regt.	10-9-18
2nd-Lieut. Thompson, E. V.	Royal West Kent Regt.	19-12-18
2nd-Lieut. Tiffin, E. F.	London Regt.	1-1-19
2nd-Lieut. Hall, G. F.	Indian Army	2-1-19
2nd-Lieut. Poole, E. W. E.	Norfolk Regt.	4-2-19
2nd-Lieut. Griffin, L. D.	Middlesex Regt.	9-1-19
2nd-Lieut. Warrington, F. W.	Suffolk Regt.	21-1-19
2nd-Lieut. Hill, J. H. C.	Cheshire Regt.	14-1-19
2nd-Lieut. Beveridge, G.	Suffolk Regt.	21-1-19
Capt. & Adjt. Hare, J. F.	K.R.R.C.	6-12-17
Lieut. & Quartermaster Fuller, H. F.	1st Hertfordshire Regt.	17-9-17

MEDICAL OFFICERS

Lieut. Kelly, T.	R.A.M.C.	—
Capt. Lea-Wilson, B. H. C.	R.A.M.C.	—
Lieut. Sutcliffe, L. E.	R.A.M.C.	—
Capt. Cunningham, A. T.	R.A.M.C.	—
Capt. Pryn, R. H. C.	R.A.M.C.	7-4-17
Capt. Bracken, J. P.	R.A.M.C.	23-9-17

CHAPLAINS

Rev. McVeigh, M. C.	—
Rev. Cosser, J. W.	—
Rev. Breen, F.	1-7-18
Rev. Coules, F. T.	17-7-18
Rev. Walsh, J.	29-3-19
Rev. Hanton, J. W.	2-12-17

Digitized by Google

APPENDIX IX.

ROLL OF OFFICERS, WARRANT OFFICERS, NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS AND MEN OF THE BATTALION WHO WERE KILLED IN ACTION, OR DIED OF WOUNDS OR DISEASE DURING THE WAR, 1914 to 1918.

Rank and Name.	Date of Death.	Cause of Death.	Place of Death, Record of Burial, and Remarks, etc.
Capt. Cumberland, B. C. ...	15-8-15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. Small cemetery about 200 yards east of Lone Tree, Suvla, Gallipoli
Capt. Baker, C. T.	15-8-15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. Small cemetery about 200 yards east of Lone Tree, Suvla, Gallipoli
Lieut. Lydekker, C. R.... ...	15-8-15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. Small cemetery about 200 yards east of Lone Tree, Suvla, Gallipoli
2nd-Lieut. Brighten, R. D. J....	15-8-15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. Small cemetery about 200 yards east of Lone Tree, Suvla, Gallipoli
Capt. Meakin, W. K.	15-8-15	Killed in Action at Suvla Bay	Death accepted for official purposes (W.O. 9/16/234. C.2.Cas., 29-8-16)
2nd-Lieut. Rising, F.	15-8-15	Killed in Action at Suvla Bay	Death accepted for official purposes (W.O. 9/16/281, C.2.Cas., 7-11-16)
Lieut. Shoosmith, F. S. ...	21-8-15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. Small cemetery about 200 yards east of Lone Tree, Suvla, Gallipoli
Capt. Smythe, R. M.	13-9-15	Died of Wounds...	Gallipoli. Died in No. 16 Casualty Clearing Station, and buried at No. 2 Post, Anzac, Gallipoli
2nd-Lieut. Dawson, J. L. ...	6-5-16	Cerebral Hæmorrhage	Government Hospital, Suez. Grave No. 526, English Cemetery, Suez
Lieut. Day, G. R.	27-8-16	Killed in Action...	
2nd-Lieut. Hose, R. H. ...	18-3-17	Killed in Action...	
T.-Lieut. Balding, R. N. (and M.G.C.)	30-3-17	Killed in Action...	
Lieut. Shaw, G. H.	11-4-17	Killed in Action...	
2nd-Lieut. Taylor, J. O. ...	19-4-17	Killed in Action...	
2nd-Lieut. Foskett, H. E. ...	28-4-17	Killed in Action...	
2nd-Lieut. Brereton, L. L. ...	29-4-17	Died of Wounds...	Egypt. Grave 227F, British Cemetery, Cairo, Egypt
Lieut. & Quarter-Master Lydekker, G. O.	14-6-17	Myasthenia Gravis	No. 17 Central Hospital, Alexandria. Grave No. 3014, Hadra Military Cemetery, Alexandria

Digitized by Google

Appendix IX—continued.

Rank and Name.	Date of Death.	Cause of Death.	Place of Death, Record of Burial, and Remarks, etc.
2nd-Lieut. Moxon, H. C. ...	19–7–17	Died of Wounds...	
2nd-Lieut. Gallo, M.C., A. M. ...	31–7–17	Killed in Action...	
2nd-Lieut. Connor, S. M. ...	10–8–17	Killed in Action...	
2nd-Lieut. Watt, K. M. ...	On or about 1–10–17	Died of Wounds whilst a Prisoner of War	Before Gaza, Palestine. A letter from 2nd-Lieut. E. E. Dennis, dated 7–10–17, himself a Prisoner of War, was dropped into our lines by hostile aircraft. No record of place of burial
Lieut. Wodehouse, E. C. B. ...	4–10–17	Killed in Action...	Gaza, Palestine. Military Cemetery, Sampson's Ridge 4 Gaza Shellal, 1.40.000
Lieut. Nixon, C. J.	8–10–17	Killed in Action...	
2nd-Lieut. Phillips, E. A. ...	2–11–17	Killed in Action...	Gaza, Palestine. Sheikh Hasan Garden Military Cemetery, 3–11–17. Ref. 1/20.000 map, P.2.D.2565
2nd-Lieut. Amesbury, H. F. R.	20–11–17	Killed in Action...	
2nd-Lieut. Forge, H. N. F. ...	20–11–17	Killed in Action...	
Capt. Franklin, M.C., T.A. ...	27–11–17	Died of Wounds...	
2nd-Lieut. Pinchin, G. H. ...	27–11–17	Died of Wounds...	Egypt. Grave No. 3030, Hadra Military Cemetery, Alexandria
2nd-Lieut. Waterton, J. E. M. C. P. A.	29–11–17	Killed in Action...	Beit Nabala, Palestine. Palestine Map, O.85.Y.7.B.29 Sheet 14
Lieut. Cronin, H. W.	2–12–17	Died of Wounds...	Palestine. Grave No. 4, Deir Sineid Cemetery
2nd-Lieut. Clark, M.C., A. V. ...	2–1–18	Died of Wounds...	
2nd-Lieut. Pratt, A.	11–2–18	Died of Wounds...	
Lieut. Davis, W. S.	22–3–18	Killed in Action...	
2nd-Lieut. Macklin, D. H. ...	27–3–18	Killed in Action...	
Capt. McBride, M.C., A. B. ...	24–4–18	Killed in Action...	
Lieut. Oertling, L. J. F. ...	8–8–18	Died of Wounds...	
Capt. Smith, F. J.	23–8–18	Died of Wounds...	
Lieut. Watson, H. J. A. ...	23–8–18	Killed in Action...	
Lieut. Spurgeon, D. F. P. (London Regt., attached 1/5th Bedfordshire Regiment)	10–9–18	Killed in Action...	Palestine. No record of burial
Capt. Yarde, M.C. and Bar, J. T.	21–9–18	Died of Wounds...	Palestine. Died of wounds in No. 76 Casualty Clearing Station, Ludd, Palestine. Place of burial not stated
Capt. Batten, J. K.	27–9–18	Killed in Action...	

Digitized by Google

Regtl. No.	Rank and Name.	Date of Death.	Cause of Death.	Place of Death, Record of Burial, and Remarks, etc.
	Major Owens, F. G. (Liverpool Regt., attached 1/5th Beds Regt.)	4-10-18	Influenzal Broncho Pneumonia	No. 44 Stationary Hospital, Kantara, Egypt. Military Cemetery, Kantara
	2nd-Lieut. Fowler, C. O. ...	23-10-18	Killed in Action...	
	2nd-Lieut. Lever, H. B. ...	23-10-18	Died. In German hands	
	Lieut. Hart, C. H.	23-10-18	Killed in Action...	
	2nd-Lieut. Wilford, M.M., W. F.	25-10-18	Died of Wounds...	
	2nd-Lieut. Davis, T. W. ...	14-11-18		
	Lieut. Woodhouse, H. E. ...	1-3-19		
	2nd-Lieut. Harding, W. K. ...	26-6-19		
3959	Sergt. Stapleton, W.	16-8-15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. Buried on Plateau half mile north of "A" Beach West
2382	Sergt. Hinks, A.	16-8-15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. North-east of Lone Tree, Suvla
5073	Pte. Blaydon, A. E.	16-8-15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. North-east of Lone Tree, Suvla
3915	Pte. Ellingham, A. J.	16-8-15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. North-east of Lone Tree, Suvla
3019	Pte. Finch, G. A. V.	16-8-15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. North-east of Lone Tree, Suvla
3840	Pte. Goodship, H.	16-8-15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. North-east of Lone Tree, Suvla
3066	Pte. Puddephatt, H. F. ...	16-8-15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. North-east of Lone Tree, Suvla
4275	Pte. Smith, A.	16-8-15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. North-east of Lone Tree, Suvla
4277	Pte. Smith, F. E.	16-8-15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. North-east of Lone Tree, Suvla
5077	Pte. Fowler, F.	16-8-15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. North-east of Lone Tree, Suvla
4489	Pte. Graves, A.	16-8-15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. North-east of Lone Tree, Suvla
4229	Pte. Hutchings, G.	16-8-15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. North-east of Lone Tree, Suvla
4905	Pte. Shreeves, M.	16-8-15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. North-east of Lone Tree, Suvla
4606	Pte. Caves, E. J.	16-8-15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. North-east of Lone Tree, Suvla
3819	Pte. Diemer, G.	16-8-15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. North-east of Lone Tree, Suvla
3178	Pte. Howe, P.	16-8-15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. North-east of Lone Tree, Suvla
4932	Pte. Overton, E.	16-8-15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. North-east of Lone Tree, Suvla
3339	Pte. Parker, C. E.	16-8-15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. North-east of Lone Tree, Suvla
4087	Pte. Berry, H.	16-8-15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. North-east of Lone Tree, Suvla
5037	Pte. Farnham, G.	16-8-15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. North-east of Lone Tree, Suvla
4291	Pte. Tuffnell, B.	16-8-15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. North-east of Lone Tree, Suvla
3744	Pte. Towne, J.	16-8-15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. North-east of Lone Tree, Suvla
3964	Pte. Folkes, F.	16-8-15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. North-east of Lone Tree, Suvla
4085	Pte. Rimmer, F.	16-8-15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. North-east of Lone Tree, Suvla
2911	Sergt. Buckingham, D. W. ...	16-8-15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. Lone Tree Gully Cemetery, Gallipoli Peninsula 19-10-15

Digitized by Google

Appendix IX—continued.

Regtl. No.	Rank and Name.	Date of Death.	Cause of Death.	Place of Death, Record of Burial, and Remarks, etc.
4245	Pte. Lloyd, A.	Not known		Was reported as "Missing in Action" on 16–8–15. Body was found on 9–10–15 by 9th Lancashire Fusiliers. Buried on 9–10–15 about 500 yards to right of Jepson's Post, Gallipoli Peninsula
3256	Corpl. Ellison, J. R.	16–8–15		Was reported "Missing, believed Killed, 16–8–15." Body found and buried. No site reported
5064	Pte. King, H.	Not known		Was reported "Missing, believed Killed, 16–8–15." Body was found towards end of September 1915, by No. 10369 L/Corpl. Waterston, 1st K.O.S.B., and buried Suvla Bay side. Cross with number and name was erected
4746	Pte. Curtis, A. J.	16–8–15	Died of Wounds	On board H.M.H.S. *Assaye*. Buried at sea between Suvla Bay and Mudros, 16–8–15
3030	Pte. Page, E. C.	16–8–15	Died of Wounds	On board H.M.H.S. *Assaye*. Buried at sea between Suvla Bay and Mudros, 16–8–15
4065	Pte. Mardle, H.	16–8–15	Died of Wounds	On board H.M.H.S. *Assaye*. Buried at sea between Suvla Bay and Mudros, 16–8–15
3449	Pte. Hurd, L.	16–8–15	Died of Wounds	On board H.M.H.S. *Somali*. Buried at sea 7 miles south of Mudros, 16–8–15
2958	Sergt. Foster, W. H.	17–8–15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. North-east of Lone Tree, Suvla
3026	L/Sergt. Dracup, A. F.... ...	17–8–15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. North-east of Lone Tree, Suvla
3035	L/Sergt. Robinson, J.	17–8–15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. South-east of Lone Tree, Suvla, 105 F.6
3684	Corpl. Billing, T.	17–8–15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. North-east of Lone Tree, Suvla
3120	Pte. Barton, B....	17–8–15	Died of Wounds	Gallipoli. Died in No. 26 Casualty Clearing Station. Buried 17–8–15, 116v top left hand corner above point 1, Anafarta Saghir, Gallipoli. Scale 1/20000
2928	Pte. Woodcroft, A.	17–8–15	Died of Wounds	On board H.M.H.S. *Assaye*. Buried at sea between Imbros and Mudros, 17–8–15
2762	Pte. Thurlow, F.	17–8–15	Died of Wounds	Died on board H.M.H.S. *Gloucester Castle*. Buried at sea, 17–8–15
3553	Pte. Stenhouse, J.	17–8–15	Died of Wounds	Died on board H.M.H.S. *Gloucester Castle*. Buried in East Mudros Cemetery, 18–8–15, Grave 107
3998	Pte. Stokes, G.	18–8–15	Died of Wounds	Died on board H.M.H.S. *Dunluce Castle*. Buried at sea between Suvla Bay and Mudros, 18–8–15
2445	Sergt. Butler, T.	18–8–15	Died of Wounds	Died on board H.M.H.S. *Assaye*. Buried in East Mudros Cemetery, 18–8–15, Grave 96
3899	Corpl. Jarvis, W.	20–8–15	Died of Wounds	Died at Floriana Hospital, Malta. Buried 20–8–15, in Pieta Cemetery, Malta, Grave 5, Row 9A

Digitized by Google

Appendix IX—continued.

Regtl. No.	Rank and Name.	Date of Death.	Cause of Death.	Place of Death, Record of Burial, and Remarks, etc.
4025	Pte. Abbott, R.	21–8–15	Died of Wounds	Died on board H.M.H.S. *Delta*. Buried at sea between Suvla and Mudros, 22–8–15
4461	Pte. Cousins, A. R.	22–8–15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. Buried about 500 yards off Jefferson's Post, on Kiretch Tepe Sirt
4327	Pte. Faulkner, A. J.	31–8–15	Died of Wounds	Died in 1/3rd East Anglian Field Ambulance. Buried at Waldens Point, near Anzac, 31–8–15
4165	Pte. Hutchings, P. J.	3–9–15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. Buried in orchard, Stafford Gully, Aghylldere, Anzac, 3–9–15
4401	Pte. Mitchell, A. E.	3–9–15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. North-east of Lone Tree, Suvla
3956	Pte. Dix, W.	4–9–15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. Buried top of King's Own Avenue, Hampshire Lane, Anzac
5089	Pte. Lawson, A....	5–9–15	Died of Wounds	Died in No. 16 Casualty Clearing Station, Gallipoli, and buried in Main Cemetery, No. 2 Post, 5–9–15
4735	Pte. Quick, H.	6–9–15	Died of Wounds	Died in No. 16 Casualty Clearing Station, Gallipoli, and buried 6–9–15 at No. 2 Post, Anzac
4350	Pte. Brown, G. H.	9–9–15	Died of Wounds	Died in Kasr-El-Aini Hospital, Cairo, and buried in New Protestant Cemetery, Old Cairo, Grave D95
4164	Pte. Maynard, W.	13–9–15	Died of Wounds	Died in No. 16 Casualty Clearing Station, and buried at No. 2 Post, Anzac, 13–9–15.
3875	Pte. Lewin, R.	15–9–15	Killed in Action...	Gallipoli. Buried in cemetery, Hampshire Lane, Aghylldere, Anzac
4933	Pte. Bygrave, F.	16–9–15	Died of Wounds	Died in No. 16 Casualty Clearing Station, and buried in Main Graveyard, 100 yards from right bank of Chalek Dere, 200 yards from beach
4081	Pte. Florin, W.	17–9–15	Died of Wounds	Died in No. 16 Casualty Clearing Station, and buried in Main Graveyard, 100 yards from right bank of Chalek Dere, 200 yards from beach
4177	Pte. Baker, W. J.	17–9–15	Died of Wounds	Died in No. 16 Casualty Clearing Station, and buried in Main Graveyard, 100 yards from right bank of Chalek Dere, 100 yards from beach
2726	Pte. Robinson, H.	24–9–15	Died of Wounds	Brought in dead to 1/3rd East Anglian Field Ambulance, and buried at 92G.9, Gallipoli
3237	Pte. Holliman, P.	26–9–15	Died of Wounds	Died in No. 16 Casualty Clearing Station, and buried in Main Graveyard, 100 yards from right bank of Chalek Dere, 100 yards from beach
5008	L/Corpl. Bowyer, L. E. ...	2–12–15	Died of Wounds	Died in No. 17 General Hospital, Alexandria, and buried in Chatby Cemetery, 3–12–15, Grave 1896

Digitized by Google

Appendix IX—continued.

Regtl. No.	Rank and Name.	Date of Death.	Cause of Death.	Place of Death, Record of Burial, and Remarks, etc.
5814	Pte. Fox, W. H.	18–9–16	Killed in Action...	Egypt. Buried Reference 1/125000, Map Africa, Sheet N.H.36J.111, B.10, 1,100 yards north of I in Bir-el-Tawal
200338	C.Q.M.S. Topham, A.	19–4–17	Killed in Action...	Gaza. Was reported wounded and missing, 19–4–17. No further trace until body was found by Burial Officer, 75th Division, in January, '18. (No record of burial.)
203484	Pte. Egan, J.	19–4–17	Killed in Action...	Gaza. Extract from Burial Report:—Body outside our line. Situated Northampton Mound, about W.15.b., Ref. Map, Gaza-Shellal, 1.40000
200193	A/Corpl. Garner, H.	19–4–17	Killed in Action...	Gaza. Extract from Burial Report:—Body outside our line. Situated Northampton Mound, about W.15.b., Ref. Map, Gaza-Shellal, 1.40000
200561	L/Corpl. Snoxell, H.	19–4–17	Killed in Action...	Gaza. Extract from Burial Report:—Body outside our line. Situated Northampton Mound, about W.15.b. Ref. Map, Gaza-Shellal, 1.40000
201355	Pte. Rule, W.	19–4–17	Killed in Action...	Gaza. Extract from Burial Report:—Body outside our line. Situated Northampton Mound, about W.15.b., Ref. Map, Gaza-Shellal, 1.40000
201447	Pte. Bird, F.	19–4–17	Killed in Action...	Gaza. Buried in Sheikh Abbas Military Cemetery, Grave No. 7
201157	Pte. Clark, F. W.	19–4–17	Killed in Action...	Gaza. Buried in Sheikh Abbas Military Cemetery, Grave No. 8
203325	Pte. Banfield, H.	20–4–17	Killed in Action...	Gaza. Extract from Burial Report:—Body outside our line. Situated Northampton Mound, about W.15.b Ref. Map, Gaza-Shellal, 1.40000
203215	Pte. Bean, W.	20–4–17	Killed in Action...	Gaza. Extract from Burial Report:—Body outside our line. Situated Northampton Mound, about W.15.b Ref. Map, Gaza-Shellal, 1.40000
200287	Sergt. Day, W.	27–4–17	Killed in Action...	Gaza. Buried in Sheikh Abbas Military Cemetery, Grave No. 11
200870	Pte. Pratt, G.	13–5–17	Died of Wounds	Died in No. 54 Casualty Clearing Station, buried in Deir-el-Belah Military Cemetery, 14–5–17, Grave 227
203179	Pte. Felkes, T.	20–7–17	Killed in Action...	Was reported missing during the action at Umbrella Hill, South-West Gaza, 20–7–17. Afterwards reported killed in action on authority of Court of Enquiry, dated 24–7–17. No record of burial

Digitized by Google

Appendix IX—continued.

Regtl. No.	Rank and Name.	Date of Death.	Cause of Death.	Place of Death, Record of Burial, and Remarks, etc.
201209	A/Lce.-Corpl. Gillett, I. F. ...	20–7–17	Killed in Action...	Was reported missing during the action at Umbrella Hill, South-West Gaza, 20–7–17. Afterwards reported killed in action on authority of Court of Enquiry, dated 24–7–17. No record of burial
200985	A/Lce.-Corpl. Watkins, P. H....	20–7–17	Killed in Action...	Gaza. No record of burial
200236	Pte. Thurlow, P.	20–7–17	Killed in Action...	Gaza. No record of burial
201399	Pte. Swain, F.	20–7–17	Killed in Action...	Gaza. No record of burial
201369	Pte. Stevens, W. J.	20–7–17	Killed in Action...	Gaza. No record of burial
201335	Pte. Pratt, W. J.	20–7–17	Killed in Action...	Gaza. No record of burial
200294	L/Sergt. Hull, C.	20–7–17	Killed in Action...	Gaza. No record of burial
201216	Pte. Granger, W. J.	20–7–17	Killed in Action...	Gaza. No record of burial
201220	Pte. Girdlestone, B.	20–7–17	Killed in Action...	Gaza. No record of burial
201203	Pte. Farr, S.	20–7–17	Killed in Action...	Gaza. No record of burial
200343	Pte. Cook, H.	20–7–17	Killed in Action...	Gaza. No record of burial
200938	L/Corpl. Caves, A. S.	20–7–17	Killed in Action...	Gaza. No record of burial
200992	Pte. Bysouth, F. J.	20–7–17	Killed in Action...	Gaza. No record of burial
15883	A/Corpl. Butcher, F. E. ...	20–7–17	Killed in Action...	Gaza. No record of burial
200662	Corpl. Breed, B.	20–7–17	Killed in Action...	Gaza. No record of burial
200712	Pte. Blaydon, C.	20–7–17	Killed in Action...	Gaza. No record of burial
200959	Pte. Ball, P.	20–7–17	Killed in Action...	Gaza. No record of burial
201103	Pte. Arnold, E.	20–7–17	Killed in Action...	Gaza. No record of burial
200634	A/Lce.-Corpl. Moate, C. ...	20–7–17	Killed in Action...	Was reported missing, but letters from comrades who were taken prisoner state he was killed. Letters dropped into our lines by enemy aeroplane
200760	Pte. Flitton, W.	21–7–17	Died of Wounds	Died in 2/1st East Anglian Field Ambulance, Gaza. Buried Tel-el-Ajjul, Q.11.C.5.5., 21–7–17
203465	Pte. Sells, C.	27–7–17	Killed in Action...	Gaza. No record of burial
200868	Pte. Mills, W.	27–7–17	Killed in Action...	Gaza. No record of burial
201248	Pte. Hipgrave, W.	27–7–17	Killed in Action...	Gaza. No record of burial
37102	A/Lce.-Corpl. Jordan, E. W. ...	On or about 1–10–17	Died of Wounds	Died from wounds received in action, whilst a Prisoner of War. Letter dated 7–10–17 from 2nd-Lieut. E. E. Dennis, also a Prisoner of War. Dropped into our lines by enemy aircraft.
200195	Sergt. Clifford, E. G.	On or about 5–10–17	Died of Wounds...	Died from wounds received in action, whilst a Prisoner of War. Particulars as above.
203163	Pte. Alford, F.	5–10–17	Died of Wounds	Died in No. 66 Casualty Clearing Station, Gaza, and buried Military Cemetery, Deir-el-Belah, 6–10–17, Grave No. 300

Digitized by Google

Appendix IX—continued.

Regtl. No.	Rank and Name.	Date of Death.	Cause of Death.	Place of Death, Record of Burial, and Remarks, etc.
203211	Pte. Smith, W. J.	7-10-17	Killed in Action...	Was previously reported missing in action, Gaza. Afterwards reported Killed in Action on decision of Court of Enquiry dated 11-10-17
201401	L/Corpl. Teat, W.	2-11-17	Killed in Action...	Sheikh Hasan. Buried 7-11-17 at Sheikh Hasan, near Gaza
37200	Pte. Swallow, G. W.	2-11-17	Killed in Action...	Sheikh Hasan. Buried Sheikh Hasan Garden Military Cemetery, 5-11-17. Ref. 1/20000 map P.2.D.2565
200938	Pte. Holmes, E....	2-11-17	Killed in Action...	Sheikh Hasan. Buried Sheikh Hasan Garden Military Cemetery, 3-11-17. Ref. 1/20000 map P.2.D.2565
201266	Sergt. Hill, A. J.	2-11-17	Killed in Action...	Sheikh Hasan. Buried 7-11-17, Sheikh Hasan
21478	Pte. Clampton, G.	2-11-17	Killed in Action...	Sheikh Hasan. Buried 7-11-17, Sheikh Hasan
201034	Pte. Bysouth, H.	2-11-17	Killed in Action...	Sheikh Hasan. No report of burial
200151	Corpl. Richardson, G.	2-11-17	Killed in Action...	Sheikh Hasan. Buried Sheikh Hasan Garden Military Cemetery, 3-11-17
201030	Pte. Peck, S. C.	2-11-17	Killed in Action...	Sheikh Hasan. Buried 3-11-17, Sheikh Hasan Garden Military Cemetery
200453	Pte. Seabrook, S.	2-11-17	Killed in Action...	Sheikh Hasan. Buried 5-11-17, Sheikh Hasan Garden Military Cemetery
200582	Pte. Dickens, F.	2-11-17	Killed in Action...	Sheikh Hasan. Buried 3-11-17, Sheikh Hasan Garden Military Cemetery
31616	Pte. Chapman, H. J. T. ...	2-11-17	Killed in Action...	Sheikh Hasan. Buried 3-11-17, Sheikh Hasan Garden Military Cemetery
21494	Pte. Bailey, A.	2-11-17	Killed in Action...	Sheikh Hasan. Burial not reported
201169	Pte. Darrington J.	2-11-17	Killed in Action...	Sheikh Hasan, near Gaza. Sheikh Hasan Garden Military Cemetery, Ref. 1/20000, map P.2.D.2565, 3-11-17
203118	Pte. Carter, V. J.	2-11-17	Died of Wounds...	Sheikh Hasan, near Gaza. No record of burial
200847	Pte. Moulden, P. H.	3-11-17	Killed in Action...	Sheikh Hasan, near Gaza. No record of burial
201042	Pte. Markham, R.	3-11-17	Killed in Action...	Sheikh Hasan, near Gaza. No record of burial
204600	Pte. Longland, G.	3-11-17	Killed in Action...	Sheikh Hasan, near Gaza. No record of burial
200646	Pte. Fiddler, P.	3-11-17	Killed in Action...	Sheikh Hasan, near Gaza. Sheikh Hasan Garden Military Cemetary, 3-11-17
203144	Pte. Parker, H.	3-11-17	Killed in Action...	Sheikh Hasan, near Gaza. No record of burial
200194	A/Lce.-Sergt. Carr, A.	3-11-17	Killed in Action...	Sheikh Hasan, near Gaza. Sheikh Hasan Military Cemetery, 3-11-17
201186	Pte. Everett, A. T.	3-11-17	Killed in Action...	Sheikh Hasan, near Gaza. Sheikh Hasan Military Cemetery, 3-11-17

Digitized by Google

Appendix IX—continued.

Regtl. No.	Rank and Name.	Date of Death.	Cause of Death.	Place of Death, Record of Burial, and Remarks, etc.
201227	Corpl. Hawkins, H. E. ...	3–11–17	Killed in Action...	Sheikh Hasan, near Gaza. Sheikh Hasan Military Cemetery, 3–11–17
200962	Pte. Stenhouse, W.	3–11–17	Killed in Action...	Sheikh Hasan, near Gaza. No record of burial
200010	Sergt. Green, G.	3–11–17	Died of Wounds...	Gaza. No record of burial
200054	Pte. Hill, A. E.	3–11–17	Died of Wounds...	Died in No. 66 Casualty Clearing Station, Gaza. No record of burial
203545	Pte. Spary, R.	3–11–17	Died of Wounds...	Died in No. 66 Casualty Clearing Station, Gaza. No record of burial
200823	Pte. Stone, A.	4–11–17	Died of Wounds...	Died in No. 43 Stationary Hospital, near Gaza. No record of burial
203185	Pte. Hazel, A. J.	10–11–17	Died of Wounds...	Died in No. 43 Stationary Hospital, near Gaza. No record of burial
200864	Corpl. Lodge, T. H.	17–11–17	Died of Wounds...	Died in No. 19 General Hospital, Alexandria. Buried in Hadra Military Cemetery, Grave No. 3716
201151	Corpl. Charge, M.M., R. ...	17–11–17	Died of Wounds...	Died in Citadel General Hospital, Cairo. Buried in the Cemetery, Old Cairo, Section O2, 18–11–17
34231	Pte. Perry, J.	29–11–17	Killed in Action...	Beit Nabala, Palestine. No record of burial
200832	Pte. Lancaster, A. H.	29–11–17	Killed in Action...	Beit Nabala, Palestine. No record of burial
36863	Pte. Godwin, H.	1–12–17	Killed in Action...	Beit Nabala, Palestine. No record of burial
46087	Pte. Hauer, R.	3–12–17	Died of Wounds...	Died in No. 77 Casualty Clearing Station, Gaza. Buried in Gaza Military Cemetery, Grave No. 10
36442	Pte. Tanner, G. T.	3–12–17	Killed in Action...	Palestine. Buried 4–12–17. 085 Q5 B3.7. Palestine map Sheet 13.
200401	A/Lce.-Sergt. Boon, J.... ...	3–12–17	Killed in Action...	Palestine. Buried 4–12–17. 085 Q5 B3.7. Palestine map Sheet 13
201122	Pte. Beesley, M.M., W. A. ...	22–12–17	Killed in Action...	Yafa Hill, Palestine. Buried 22–12–17. Palestine map Sheet 13, O.85.Q.5.B.3.7.
21480	Pte. Pamment, F.	22–12–17	Killed in Action...	Yafa Hill, Palestine. Buried 22–12–17. Palestine map Sheet 13. O.85.Q.5.B.3.7.
203149	A/Lce.-Corpl. Saunders, A. ...	22–12–17	Killed in Action...	Yafa Hill, Palestine. Buried 22–12–17. Palestine map Sheet 13. O.85.Q.5.B.3.7.
37096	A/Corpl. Lawrence, M.M., J. ...	22–12–17	Killed in Action...	Yafa Hill, Palestine. Buried 22–12–17. Palestine map Sheet 13. O.85.Q.5.B.3.7.
27950	Pte. Foster, W.	23–12–17	Died of Wounds...	Died in No. 75 Casualty Clearing Station, Junction Station, Palestine. Buried 24–12–17 in Junction Station Cemetery, Grave No. 73
200190	Pte. George, A.	30–12–17	Drowned at Sea...	Drowned in the sinking of the H.T. *Aragon*

Digitized by Google

Appendix IX—continued.

Regtl. No.	Rank and Name.	Date of Death.	Cause of Death.	Place of Death, Record of Burial, and Remarks, etc.
271173	Pte. Williams, D. E.	30–12–17	Drowned at Sea...	Drowned in the sinking of the H.T. *Aragon*
266567	Pte. Mealing, J. A.	30–12–17	Drowned at Sea...	Drowned in the sinking of the H.T. *Aragon*
203274	Pte. Caves, J. S.	30–12–17	Drowned at Sea...	Drowned in the sinking of the H.T. *Aragon*
48065	Pte. Allaway, F. F.	30–12–17	Drowned at Sea...	Drowned in the sinking of the H.T. *Aragon*
48057	Pte. Macmillan, G. S.	30–12–17	Drowned at Sea...	Drowned in the sinking of the H.T. *Aragon*
43368	Pte. Joyce, F.	30–12–17	Drowned at Sea...	Drowned in the sinking of the H.T. *Aragon*
39234	Pte. Gregory, C. H.	30–12–17	Drowned at Sea...	Drowned in the sinking of the H.T. *Aragon*
31908	Pte. Hodson, W.	30–12–17	Drowned at Sea...	Drowned in the sinking of the H.T. *Aragon*
31896	Pte. Westwood, F. C.	30–12–17	Drowned at Sea...	Drowned in the sinking of the H.T. *Aragon*
31780	Pte. Perry, W. E.	30–12–17	Drowned at Sea...	Drowned in the sinking of the H.T. *Aragon*
30901	Pte. Minnis, A. W.	30–12–17	Drowned at Sea...	Drowned in the sinking of the H.T. *Aragon*
28868	Pte. English, L. C.	30–12–17	Drowned at Sea...	Drowned in the sinking of the H.T. *Aragon*
27798	Pte. Jinks, W.	30–12–17	Drowned at Sea...	Drowned in the sinking of the H.T. *Aragon*
23397	Pte. Beesley, E. G.	30–12–17	Drowned at Sea...	Drowned in the sinking of the H.T. *Aragon*
21810	Pte. Markham, J. S.	30–12–17	Drowned at Sea...	Drowned in the sinking of the H.T. *Aragon*
21806	Pte. Wearne, C. A.	30–12–17	Drowned at Sea...	Drowned in the sinking of the H.T. *Aragon*
21798	Pte. Wright, J. W.	30–12–17	Drowned at Sea...	Drowned in the sinking of the H.T. *Aragon*
21788	Pte. Eastland, C. E.	30–12–17	Drowned at Sea...	Drowned in the sinking of the H.T. *Aragon*
21776	Pte. Beamiss, H.	30–12–17	Drowned at Sea...	Drowned in the sinking of the H.T. *Aragon*
21759	Pte. Elsy, C. F.	30–12–17	Drowned at Sea...	Drowned in the sinking of the H.T. *Aragon*
21757	Pte. Simpson, S. T.	30–12–17	Drowned at Sea...	Drowned in the sinking of the H.T. *Aragon*
21638	Pte. Mills, J. W.	30–12–17	Drowned at Sea...	Drowned in the sinking of the H.T. *Aragon*
14536	Pte. White, W. J.	30–12–17	Drowned at Sea...	Drowned in the sinking of the H.T. *Aragon*
45202	C.Q.M.S. McDonald, D. ...	30–12–17	Drowned at Sea...	Drowned in the sinking of the H.T. *Aragon*. Body recovered and buried in Hadra Military Cemetery, Alexandria, 31–12–17, Grave No. 4726
201240	Sergt. Holmes, A.	2–1–18	Died of Wounds...	Died in No. 75 Casualty Clearing Station, Junction Station, Palestine, and buried in Junction Station Cemetery, 3–1–18, Grave 91
201353	Pte. Richardson, A.	17–1–18	Died of Wounds...	Died in No. 77 Casualty Clearing Station, Jaffa, and buried in Jaffa and Sarona Military Cemetery, 18–1–18, Grave No. 161
271510	Pte. Day, L.	4–2–18	Died of Wounds...	Died in No. 43 Stationary Hospital, Masaid, Egypt. Buried in Masaid Military Cemetery, 5–2–18, Grave 203
48787	Pte. Smith, A. E.	29–3–18	Killed in Action...	Palestine. Buried 30–3–18. Ref. Palestine map Sheet 17, U.3.C.3.5.

Digitized by Google

Appendix IX—continued.

Regtl. No.	Rank and Name.	Date of Death.	Cause of Death.	Place of Death, Record of Burial, and Remarks, etc.
36864	Pte. Miles, E. L.	29–3–18	Killed in Action...	Palestine. Buried 30–3–18. Ref. Palestine map Sheet 17, U.3.C.3.5
14997	Pte. Camp, F.	29–3–18	Died of Wounds...	Palestine. Buried 30–3–18. Ref. Palestine map Sheet 17, U.3.C.3.5
47427	Pte. Russell, J.	30–3–18	Died of Wounds...	Died in No. 76 Casualty Clearing Station, Ludd, Palestine, and buried 31–3–18 in Ramleh Military Cemetery, Grave No. 28
26726	Pte. Brace, W. C.	30–3–18	Died of Wounds...	Died in No. 26 Casualty Clearing Station, Ludd, Palestine, and buried 31–3–18 in Ramleh Military Cemetery, Grave No. 27
21966	Pte. Fry, W. F.	30–3–18	Died of Wounds...	Died in 1/2nd East Anglian Field Ambulance, Palestine. No report of burial
203455	Pte. Cleaver, S. C.	8–4–18	Killed in Action...	Palestine. Buried 8–4–18. Ref. Palestine Map Sheet 17, U.3.C.3.5
21902	Pte. Walker, J.	8–4–18	Killed in Action...	Palestine. Buried 8–4–18. Ref. Palestine Map Sheet 17, U.3.C.3.5
21475	Pte. Cowler, C. V.	14–4–18	Killed in Action...	Palestine. Buried 14–4–18. Ref. Palestine Map Sheet 17, U.3.C.3.5
200616	Pte. Parrott, M.M., R.... ...	13–5–18	Died of Wounds...	Died in No. 76 Casualty Clearing Station, Ludd, Palestine, buried 13–5–18, Ramleh Military Cemetery, Grave No. 52
201304	Pte. Lyons, R. S.	4–6–18	Killed in Action...	Palestine. Buried 4–6–18 at Mulebbis
15194	Pte. Brazier, E.	19–9–18	Killed in Action...	Palestine. No report of burial
201167	Pte. Clarke, A. W.	19–9–18	Killed in Action...	Palestine. Buried 22–9–18. Ref. Fejja map, C.3, 3rd Ed. prov., 1/40000 U.2.b.4.5
201265	Pte. Howard, G. A.	19–9–18	Killed in Action...	Palestine. Buried 22–9–18. Ref. Fejja map, C.3, 3rd Ed. prov., 1/40000.U.2.b.4.5
200409	C.Q.M.S. Moore, J.	19–9–18	Killed in Action...	Palestine. Buried 22–9–18. Ref. Fejja map, C.3, 3rd Ed. prov., 1/40000.U.2.b.4.5
200325	Pte. Moore, J. H. G.	19–9–18	Died of Wounds...	Died en route to No. 26 Casualty Clearing Station, Ludd, Palestine. Buried 19–9–18 in Military Cemetery, Ramleh, Grave No. 106
18685	Pte. Cole, J.	19–9–18	Killed in Action...	Palestine. Buried Kefr Kasin, east of Kasin Wood, Fejja map C.39B. 20–9–18
270182	Pte. Martin, S. R.	19–9–18	Killed in Action...	Palestine. Buried 22–9–18. Ref. Fejja map C.3, 3rd Ed. prov. 1/40000, U.2.b.4.5
268204	Pte. Seargeant, L. P.	19–9–18	Killed in Action...	Palestine. Buried 22–9–18. Ref. Fejja map C.3, 3rd Ed. prov. 1/40000, U.2.b.4.5

Digitized by Google

Appendix IX—continued.

Regtl. No.	Rank and Name.	Date of Death.	Cause of Death.	Place of Death, Record of Burial, and Remarks, etc.
200280	Pte. Loughton, W. T.	14–11–17	Heart Failure ...	In the Field. Palestine. (El Nuzle)
4536	Pte. Skerman, W.	22–9–15	Enteric Fever ...	Died in 15th General Hospital, Alexandria. Buried Chatby Cemetery, Grave No. 2414, 22–9–15
3073	Pte. Ibbett, W. G.	23–9–15	Pneumonia ...	Died on board H.M.H.S. *Guildford Castle.* Buried at sea 23–9–15
3974	Pte. Moore, H.	24–9–15	Dysentery ...	Died in Imtarfa Hospital, Malta. Buried Pieta Cemetery, Malta, 24–9–15. Grave No. 5, Row 14B
4791	Pte. Burridge, E. E.	29–9–15	Dysentery ...	Died in No 15 General Hospital, Alexandria. Buried Chatby Cemetery, 30–9–15. Grave No. 1652
3971	Pte. Creek, W.	12–10–15	Dysentery ...	Died in Tigne Hospital, Malta. Buried Pieta Cemetery, 12–10–15, Grave No. 1, Row 14A
3816	Pte. Stapleton, C. E.	3–11–15	Dysentery ...	Died in St. Andrew's Military Hospital, Malta. Buried Pieta Cemetery, 4–11–15, Grave No. 2, Row 2D
3324	Drumr. Crosham, H. A. ...	17–11–15	Enteric Fever ...	Died in Imtarfa Hospital, Malta. Buried Pieta Cemetery, 18–11–15, Grave No. 6, Row 7D
4546	Pte. Eddy, E.	24–12–15	Drowned accidently	Mudros Harbour. Body was washed ashore and buried at Lemnos, four miles south of west side of harbour entrance, fifteen yards from beach on 14th Jan., 1916
5349	Pte. Lewin, H.	28–6–16	Heat Stroke ...	Died in the Government Hospital, Suez, and buried in the English Cemetery, Suez, on 29–6–16, Grave No. 556
3629	Pte. Custance, H. G.	29–6–16	Pyrexia U.O. ...	Died in No. 18 Stationary Hospital, Suez, and buried in the English Cemetery, Suez, on 29–6–16, Grave No. 559
3872	Sergt. Hoolochen, M.	7–7–16	Heat Stroke ...	Died in No. 18 Stationary Hospital, Suez, and buried in the English Cemetery, Suez, on 7–7–16, Grave No. 560
3142	L/Cpl. McCormick, R.... ...	16–7–16	Enteric Fever ...	Died in No. 18 Stationary Hospital, Suez, and buried in the English Cemetary, Suez, on 16–7–16,Grave No. 565
4631	Pte. Dumpleton, P.	22–8–16	Inflammation of Membrane of brain	Died in 27th General Hospital, Abbassia, Cairo, and buried in Old Cairo Cemetery on 22–8–16, Grave No. F138
4008	Pte. Pope, H. J.	3–11–16	G.S. Wound, Abdomen (Accidnl.)	Died in No. 121 Indian Field Ambulace, El Shatt, Suez, and buried at El Shatt, Suez Canal East, 3–11–16. Grave No. 1
201349	Pte. Rudderham, H. E. ...	7–2–17	Pneumonia ...	Died in No. 24 Stationary Hospital, Kantara, and buried at Kantara, 8–2–17, Grave No. 58
201403	Pte. Tharby, J. W.	16–3–17	Broncl. Pneumonia	Died in No. 24. Stationary Hospital, Kantara, and buried at Kantara, 17–3–17, Grave No. 64
200728	Pte. Kirby, S.	26–8–17	Accidentally killed by a fall of earth	Killed in the Field, Palestine. Buried in Essex Cemetery, 27–8–17, at junction of Barlow Road and Welsh Wadi

Digitized by Google

Appendix IX—continued.

Regtl. No.	Rank and Name.	Date of Death.	Cause of Death.	Place of Death, Record of Burial, and Remarks, etc.
203151	Pte. Stanbridge, A.	14–12–17	Diarrhoea ...	Died in No. 43 Stationary Hospital, Masaid, and buried in Masaid Military Cemetery, 15–12–17, Grave No. 167
200907	Pte. Johnson W.	27–12–17	Pneumonia ...	Died in No. 147 Field Ambulance, Ramleh, Palestine, and buried in Military Cemetery, Ramleh, 29–12–17, Grave No. 13
200233	R.Q.M.S. Scott, E.	12–1–18	Broncl. Pneumonia	Died in 2/4th London Field Ambulance, Palestine. No record of burial
200315	Pte. Marshall, F. A.	12–5–18	Typhus Fever and Hypostatic Pneumonia	Died in No. 44 Stationary Hospital, Kantara, and buried 12–5–18, in European Cemetery, Kantara, Grave No. 265
200640	A/Corpl. Last, G. A.	25–9–18	Dysentery ...	Died in No. 31 General Hospital, Abbassia, Cairo, and buried in New Cemetery, Cairo, 28–9–18, Grave No. 250, "O" Section
200950	Pte. Jarvis, S. L.	3–11–18	Pneumonia ...	Died in No. 31 General Hospital, Abbassia, Cairo, and buried in Protestant Cemetery, Cairo, 5–11–1. Grave Q65
21474	Pte. Cook, R.	4–11–18	Pneumonia ...	Died in No. 27 General Hospital, Abbassia, Cairo, and buried in New Cemetery, Cairo, 5–11–18, Grave Q67
31445	Pte. Howe, C. E.	4–11–18	Broncl. Pneumonia and Malaria	Died in No. 19 General Hospital, Alexandria, and buried in Hadra Military Cemetery, 4–11–18, Grave No. 4195
201356	Pate. Ratcliffe, W. D.	30–10–18	Pneumonia ...	Died in No. 17 General Hospital, Alexandria, and buried in Hadra Military Cemetery, 30–10–18, Grave No. 4171
200118	Pte. Boon, F.	17–10–18	Broncl. Pneumonia	Died in No. 27 General Hospital, Abbassia, Cario, and buried in Protestant Cemetery, Cairo, 17–10–18, Grave No. 326, "O" Section
201348	Pte. Robinson, A.	24–10–18	Enteric Fever ...	Died in No. 76 Casualty Clearing Station, Ludd, Palestine, and buried in Ramleh Military Cemetery, 24–10–18, Grave No. 242
201405	Sergt. Taylor, M.M., H. G. ...	3–11–18	Malaria	Died in No. 32 Casualty Clearing Station, Beirut, Palestine, and buried in Military Cemetary, Beirut, 3–11–18
203329	Pte. Needham, V.C., S. ...	4–11–18	G.S. Wound, Head	At No. 1 Base, Depot, Kantara, Egypt. Buried in British Cemetery, Kantara, 4–11–18, Grave No. 389
12867	Pte. Allen, C. F.	8–11–18	Pneumonia ...	Died in No. 15 Casualty Clearing Station, Beirut, Palestine, and buried in Military Cemetery, Beirut, 8–11–18
203126	Pte. Gregory, W.	9–11–18	Pneumonia ...	Died in No. 31 General Hospital, Cairo, and buried in Old Cairo Cemetery, 9–11–18, Grave Q34

Digitized by Google

Appendix IX—continued.

Regtl. No.	Rank and Name.	Date of Death.	Cause of Death.	Place of Death, Record of Burial, and Remarks, etc.
200157	Pte. Wrighting, A. W.	14–11–18	Malaria	Died in No. 32 Casualty Clearing Station, Beirut, Palestine, and buried in Military Cemetery, Beirut, 14–11–18
201230	Pte. Hedges, J. R.	16–11–18	Pneumonia ...	Died in 1/2nd East Anglian Field Ambulance, in the Field, and buried at Mar Titla, near Es Safre. Ref. map, Tripoly 1/125000, Sq.No. B.1.8.b.12, on 16–11–18
265072	Pte. Flint, F.	19–11–18	Pneumonia ...	Died in No. 78 General Hospital, Deir el Belah, Palestine, and buried in the cemetery Deir el Belah, 19–11–18
200464	L/Sergt. Barrett, G.	19–11–18	Malaria	Died in No. 87 General Hospital, Alexandria, and buried at Hadra Military Cemetery, 19–11–18
203192	Pte. Noy, W. H.	20–11–18	Malaria M.T., Diarrhoea	Died in No. 19 General Hospital, Alexandria, and buried in Military Cemetery, Alexandria, 21–11–18, Grave No. 4279
37143	Pte. Pomphret, A. J.	21–11–18	Malaria	Died in No. 32 Casualty Clearing Station, Beirut, Palestine, and buried in Military Cemetery, Beirut, 21–11–18, Grave No. 5, Row 7
203166	Pte. Beedle, W.	21–11–18	Malaria	Died in No. 15 Casualty Clearing Station, Beirut, Palestine, and buried in Military Cemetery, Beirut, 21–11–18, Grave No. 3, Row 7
47156	Pte. Beattie, W. S.	28–11–18	Dysentery ...	Died in No. 21 General Hospital, Alexandria, and buried in Hadra Military Cemetery, 28–11–18
37214	Pte. Griffin, G.	29–11–18	Malaria	Died in No. 17 General Hospital, Alexandria, and buried in Hadra Military Cemetery, 29–11–18, Grave No. 4870
201224	Pte. Game, H.	11–12–18	Pneumonia ...	Died in No. 24 Stationary Hospital, Kantara, Egypt, and buried in British Cemetery, Kantara, 12–12–18, Grave No. 436(2)
201238	Pte. Hardwidge, J.	Not known	Accident'ly drowned in Suez Canal	Body was recovered on 13th December, 1918, and buried in Kantara Military Cemetery, on 14–12–18, Grave No. 443
47286	Pte. Dowe, H. C.	25–1–19	Pneumonia ...	Died in No. 88 General Hospital, Cairo, and buried in British Military Cemetery 25–1–19
200854	Pte. Harris, J.	25–1–19	Broncl. Pneumonia	Died in No. 27 General Hospital, Cairo, Egypt, and buried in British Military Cemetery, Old Cairo, 27–1–19
201371	Pte. Stringer, F.	16–6–19	Pneumonia ...	Died in No. 21 General Hospital, Alexandria, and buried in Hadra Military Cemetery, 16–6–19
35913	Pte. Furze, S.	17–6–19	Paratyphoid "A" and "B" and Myelitis	Died in No. 26 Stationary Hospital, Ismailia, Egypt, and buried in Ismailia Cemetery, 18–6–19, Grave No. 1382

Digitized by Google

APPENDIX X.

ROLL OF OFFICERS AND OTHER RANKS OF THE BATTALION MISSING.

Rgtl. No.	Rank and Name.	Missing.	Official Decision.
4386	Pte. Anderson, E. ...	15–8–15	Regarded for official purposes as having died on or since 15–8–15.
3715	L/Cpl. Dumpleton, W.	*15–8–15	Afterwards reported as " Killed in Action " on the authority of a statement made by No. 6832 Pte. D. Dobbs, 3rd K.O.S.B., who states that he found L/Cpl. Dumpleton's body on the 20th September, 1915.
4108	Pte. Trueman, R. ...	15–8–15	Regarded for official purposes as having died on or since 15–8–15.
3099	Pte. Snoxell, C. ...	15–8–15	Regarded for official purposes as having died on or since 15–8–15.
4487	Pte. Fensome, W. ...	15–8–15	Regarded for official purposes as having died on or since 15–8–15.
3323	Pte. Gribble, A. ...	15–8–15	Regarded for official purposes as having died on or since 15–8–15.
3005	Pte. Carter, H. B. ...	15–8–15	Regarded for official purposes as having died on or since 15–8–15.
4414	Pte. Bacchus, C. ...	15–8–15	Regarded for official purposes as having died on or since 15–8–15.
3500	Pte. Ambridge, C. J....	15–8–15	Regarded for official purposes as having died on or since 15–8–15.
3457	Cpl. Payne, N. ...	15–8–15	Regarded for official purposes as having died on or since 15–8–15.
2289	L/Sergt. Payne, A. ...	15–8–15	Regarded for official purposes as having died on or since 15–8–15.
3796	L/Sergt. Hopkins, T....	15–8–15	Regarded for official purposes as having died on or since 15–8–15.
2846	Pte. Perry, F. E. ...	15–8–15	Regarded for official purposes as having died on or since 15–8–15.
3834	Pte. Knight, A. F. ...	15–8–15	Regarded for official purposes as having died on or since 15–8–15.
203213	Pte. White, F. ...	*19–4–17	Regarded for official purposes as having died on or since 19–4–17.
200592	Pte. Hull, F.	20–7–17	Regarded for official purposes as having died on or since 20–7–17.
200802	Pte. Perry, W. F. ...	20–7–17	Regarded for official purposes as having died on or since 20–7–17.
203114	Pte. Catling, J. W. ...	27–7–17	Regarded for official purposes as having died on or since 27–7–17.
201222	Pte. Garrett, A. C. ...	27–7–17	Regarded for official purposes as having died on or since 27–7–17.
201050	Pte. Johns, H. ...	27–7–17	Regarded for official purposes as having died on or since 27–7–17
200626	Pte. Lomas, J. ...	27–7–17	Regarded for official purposes as having died on or since 27–7–17
200327	Pte. Moss, W. ...	27–7–17	Regarded for official purposes as having died on or since 27–7–17
200942	Pte. Odell, S.	27–7–17	Regarded for official purposes as having died on or since 20–7–17
201321	Pte. Newman, W. ...	*20–7–17	Regarded for official purposes as having died on or since 20–7–17
201326	Pte. Patterson, W. ...	20–7–17	Died at Aleppo on 30th October, 1917, whilst a Prisoner of War. Authority :— Ottoman Red Crescent List dated 14–4–19
200573	Pte. Cook, A. G. ...	20–7–17	Died at Afoin Kara, Hissan, on or about 4–11–18, whilst a Prisoner of War. Authority :—Statement by No. 200792 Pte. D. Toyer, 1/5th Bedfordshire Regt., a repatriated prisoner of war from Turkey.
200402	A/Cpl. Boon, S. ...	28–3–18	Regarded for official purposes as having died on or since 28–3–18
21502	Pte. Simpson, C. J. ...	29–3–18	Regarded for official purposes as having died on or since 29–3–18
47161	Pte. Davies, A. E. ...	11–9–18	Regarded for official purposes as having died on or since 11–9–18
203158	Pte. White, W. ...	11–9–18	Regarded for official purposes as having died on or since 11–9–18

* Believed killed.

Digitized by Google

APPENDIX XI.

HONOURS AND AWARDS TO INDIVIDUALS OF THE BATTALION DURING THE GREAT WAR 1914–1918.

THE VICTORIA CROSS.

203329 Pte. Needham, S. ... *London Gazette*, Suppt. No. 12803 dated 30–10–18

Extract from Army Order 368 *of* 1918.

VICTORIA CROSS. His Majesty the King has been graciously pleased to approve of the award of the Victoria Cross to the undermentioned officers, non-commissioned officers and men :—

No. 203329 PRIVATE SAMUEL NEEDHAM, Bedfordshire Regiment.

For most conspicuous bravery and initiative when with a strong patrol which was heavily attacked by the enemy and forced back in confusion. At this critical moment Private Needham ran back and fired rapidly at a body of the enemy at point blank range.

His action checked the enemy and enabled the patrol commander to reorganise his men. The patrol had many casualties, but successfully got back all their wounded, and it was due to the action of individuals, of which this is the most outstanding, that the entire patrol was not cut off. Private Needham's example was one of the greatest value at a critical moment, and the bold and determined stand made by him did more than anything to inspire confidence, and undoubtedly saved a critical situation.

The foregoing appeared in the London Gazette, dated 30th October 1918.

THE MOST DISTINGUISHED ORDER OF ST. MICHAEL AND ST. GEORGE

Lieut.-Colonel Brighten, E. W. ...	Appointed a Companion of the above Most Distinguished Order, *London Gazette* dated 2–2–16

THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE ORDER

Major Younghusband, H. ...	*London Gazette*, dated 2–2–16
Major Metcalfe, C. H. F. ...	*London Gazette*, dated 1–1–17
Lieut.-Colonel Brighten, E. W., C.M.G.	*London Gazette*, Suppt. dated 1–1–18, No. 30450

THE MILITARY CROSS

Capt. Chirnside, W. S.	List of Awards 49, dated 6–11–15
Capt. James, C. R.	*London Gazette*, dated 4–6–17
Capt. Armstrong, H. S. ...	List of Awards 303, dated 10–8–17
Capt. Miskin, C. H.	List of Awards 303, dated 10–8–17
Lieut. Shaw, W. A.	List of Awards 303, dated 10–8–17
Capt. Yarde, J. T.	List of Awards 332, dated 28–1–18
200007 R.S.M. Milton, A. ...	List of Awards 332, dated 28–1–18
Lieut. Smythe, B. W.	List of Awards 338, dated 11–2–18
Capt. Hobbs, F. B.	*London Gazette*, Suppt. dated 1–1–18, No. 30450
2nd-Lieut. Mayers, W. H. ...	List of Awards 371, dated 18–7–18
2nd-Lieut. Gooderham, F. ...	List of Awards 371, dated 18–7–18
Captain Maier, E. T.	List of Awards ——, dated 1–1–19

BAR TO MILITARY CROSS

Major Chirnside, M.C.	*London Gazette*, dated 18–7–17
Capt. J. T. Yarde, M.C. ...	List of Awards 391, dated 7–11–18

THE DISTINGUISHED CONDUCT MEDAL

201450 C.S.M. Chandler, J. J. ...	*London Gazette*, dated 22–10–17
3992 A/C.Q.M.S. Bell, R. ...	List of Awards 49, dated 6–11–15
200007 C.S.M. Milton, A. ...	*London Gazette*, dated 3–3–16
3785 Pte. Bryant. H. ...	*London Gazette*, dated 3–3–16
203146 Sergt. Sharpe, A. T. ...	List of Awards 303, dated 10–8–17
13080 Cpl. Ball, A. H.	List of Awards 332, dated 28–1–18
203148 Sergt. Sapsford, S. ...	List of Awards 332, dated 28–1–18
200290 L/Sergt. Emerton, H. ...	List of Awards 338, dated 11–2–18
200024 C.S.M. Young, W. ...	List of Awards 391, dated 7–11–18
201118 Pte. Baldwin, H., M.M....	List of Awards 391, dated 7–11–18
200382 C.S.M. Day, A. J. ...	List of Awards ——, dated 3–6–19

Digitized by Google

THE MILITARY MEDAL

201137	Pte. Baldwin, J. ...	*London Gazette*, dated 11–11–16
200077	L/Cpl. Abrahams, W. G.	List of Awards 286, dated 17–5–17
37096	Pte. Lawrence, J. ...	List of Awards 303, dated 10–8–17
31734	Pte. Worrow, D. A. J.	List of Awards 303, dated 10–8–17
201222	Pte. Garrett, A. C. ...	*London Gazette*, dated 18–10–17
201050	Pte. Johns, H.	*London Gazette*, dated 18–10–17
201131	Cpl. Burgess, F.... ...	*London Gazette*, dated 18–10–17
200052	Cpl. Dennis, A.	*London Gazette*, dated 18–10–17
200616	Pte. Parrott, R.... ...	*London Gazette*, dated 18–10–17
201509	Sergt. Whyman, W. H. ...	*London Gazette*, dated 18–10–17
204450	C.S.M. Chandler, J. J....	*London Gazette*, dated 18–10–17
201468	Pte. Pushman, G. J. ...	*London Gazette*, dated 18–10–17
201405	Cpl. Taylor, H. G. ...	*London Gazette*, dated 18–10–17
201305	Pte. Lawman, J. T. W....	*London Gazette*, dated 18–10–17
20470	Pte. Trueman, A. ...	*London Gazette*, dated 18–10–17
200938	Pte. Holmes, E.	*London Gazette*, dated 18–10–17
201076	Pte. Ruff, E.	*London Gazette*, dated 18–10–17
200530	Cpl. Webb, S. W. ...	*London Gazette*, dated 18–10–17
201122	Pte. Beesley, W. A. ...	*London Gazette*, dated 18–10–17
201151	Cpl. Charge, R.	*London Gazette*, dated 18–10–17
200195	Sergt. Clifford, E. G. ...	*London Gazette*, dated 18–10–17
201359	L/Cpl. Reeve, H. ...	*London Gazette*, dated 18–10–17
201336	Pte. Pratt, W.	*London Gazette*, dated 18–10–17
12231	Pte. Else, E.	List of Awards 313, dated 26–10–17
200040	Pte. Bunyan, W. ...	List of Awards 313, dated 26–10–17
200548	Pte. Chamberlain, H. J.	List of Awards 332, dated 28–1–18
201411	L/Cpl. Varnham, H. ...	List of Awards 332, dated 28–1–18
201066	Pte. Joyce, A. C. ...	List of Awards 332, dated 28–1–18
200286	Pte. Halfpenny, A. ...	List of Awards 332, dated 28–1–18
201284	Cpl. Kent, H. G.... ...	List of Awards 332, dated 28–1–18
201376	Pte. Sallows, S. J. ...	List of Awards 332, dated 28–1–18
200152	Pte. Andrews, F. ...	List of Awards 332, dated 28–1–18
200467	Pte. Hayller, W.... ...	List of Awards 332, dated 28–1–18
201287	Pte. Kingham, W. ...	List of Awards 332, dated 28–1–18
201283	Pte. Knight, G.	List of Awards 332, dated 28–1–18
201126	Sergt. Hawking, R. E. ...	List of Awards 332, dated 28–1–18
200559	Sergt. Marlow, C. ...	List of Awards 338, dated 11–2–18
201195	Pte. Field, F. H.... ...	List of Awards 338, dated 11–2–18
201118	Pte Baldwin, H.	List of Awards 338, dated 11–2–18
200698	Pte. Brightman, A. ...	List of Awards 338, dated 11–2–18
200902	Pte. Brown, E. J. ...	List of Awards 338, dated 11–2–18
47179	Pte. Pennycock, T. ...	List of Awards 371, dated 18–7–18
201056	Cpl. Welsh, S.	List of Awards 371, dated 18–7–18
21746	Cpl. Boyd, J.	List of Awards 394, dated 21–11–18
25903	Pte. Slough, L. H. ...	List of Awards 394, dated 21–11–18
201295	Sergt. Law, T. H. ...	List of Awards 394, dated 21–11–18
204612	Pte. Smith, F. T. ...	List of Awards 394, dated 21–11–18
201502	Cpl. Prince, V.	List of Awards 394, dated 21–11–18

BAR TO MILITARY MEDAL

201151	Cpl. Charge, R.	List of Awards 332, dated 28–1–18

MENTIONED IN DESPATCHES FOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICES

Lieut.-Colonel Brighten, E. W. ...	*London Gazette*, dated 28–1–16
Major Younghusband, H. ...	*London Gazette*, dated 28–1–16
Major Clutton, J.	*London Gazette*, May, 1916
Lt.-Col. Brighten, E. W., C.M.G.	*London Gazette*, dated 13–7–16
2nd-Lieut. Wodehouse, C. R. ...	*London Gazette*, dated 13–7–16
Major Metcalfe, C. H. F. ...	*London Gazette*, dated 4–1–17
Lt.-Col. Brighten, E. W., C.M.G.	*London Gazette*, dated 1–12–16
Capt. Yarde, J. T.	*London Gazette*, dated 1–12–16
Capt. James, C. R.	*London Gazette*, dated 6–7–17

Digitized by Google

Mentioned in Despatches for Distinguished Services—continued.

Major Clutton, J.	*London Gazette*, dated Aug. 1917
Capt. Armstrong, H. S., M.C. ...	*London Gazette*, dated 11–1–18
Lieut.-Colonel Brighten, E. W., C.M.G., D.S.O.	*London Gazette*, dated 11–1–18
Capt. Hobbs, F. B.	*London Gazette*, dated 11–1–18
Capt. Yarde, J. T.	*London Gazette*, dated 16–1–18
Major Metcalfe, C. H. F. ...	*London Gazette*, dated 14–6–18
Capt. Draper, C. B.	*London Gazette*, dated 14–6–18
200007 C.S.M. Milton, A. ...	*London Gazette*, dated 13–7–16
2289 L/Sergt. Payne, A. ...	*London Gazette*, dated 13–7–16
3785 Pte. Bryant, H. ...	*London Gazette*, dated 13–7–16
4363 Pte. King, F.	*London Gazette*, dated 13–7–16
200382 C.S.M. Day, A. J. ...	*London Gazette*, dated 6–7–17
200130 Sergt. Counter, P. F. ...	*London Gazette*, dated 6–7–17
200390 Sergt. Brown, P. ...	*London Gazette*, dated 11–1–18
201450 C.S.M. Chandler, J. J. ...	*London Gazette*, dated 11–1–18
203173 Pte. Devereux, T. ...	*London Gazette*, dated 11–1–18
200200 Pte. Peacock, E.... ...	*London Gazette*, dated 11–1–18
201359 Pte. Reeve, H.	*London Gazette*, dated 11–1–18
200345 Sergt. Childerley, J. P. ...	*London Gazette*, dated 16–1–18
200254 L/Cpl. Hodsden, G. ...	*London Gazette*, dated 16–1–18
200091 C.S.M. Lewzey, W. J. ...	*London Gazette*, dated 16–1–18
200047 R.Q.M.S. Parker, T. C.	*London Gazette*, dated 16–1–18
201131 Sergt. F. Burgess, M.M.	*London Gazette*, dated 14–6–18
Major Hill, J. E.	*London Gazette*, dated 16–1–18 *London Gazette*, dated 22–1–19

HONOURS CONFERRED BY ALLIED POWERS.

2092 A/R.S.M. Milton, A. ...	Awarded the "Medaille Militaire," *London Gazette*, dated 24–2–16
Lieut.-Colonel Clutton, J. ...	Awarded the "Order of the White Eagle of Serbia" (with sword), 3rd Class; July, 1916
2975 Pte. Abraham, W.	Awarded "Silver Medal of Serbia." List of Awards 192, dated 7–9–16
200382 C.S.M. Day, A. J. ...	Awarded the "Medaille Militaire." List of Awards 272, dated 21–5–17

THE ORDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE (Military Division).

Major Hill, J. E. ... O.B.E. Capt. R. Forrest ... M.B.E.

HONOURS AND AWARDS SINCE THE WAR.

THE ORDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE. Capt. Ridgewell, W. H. M.B.E.

TERRITORIAL DECORATION

Lieut.-Colonel Brighten, E. W., C.M.G., D.S.O.	*London Gazette*, dated 28–8–18
Major Metcalfe, C. H. F., D.S.O.	*London Gazette*, dated 6–5–20
Major Taylor, J. W.	*London Gazette*, dated 4–7–22
Major Forrest, R., M.B.E. ...	*London Gazette*, dated 9–10–23
Colonel Spenser Jackson, T.D., D.L.	*London Gazette*, dated 5–5–25

TERRITORIAL EFFICIENCY MEDAL

		Coy.	
5944338	Cpl. Thomson, W.	B	March, 1922
5944772	Sergt. Franklin, R. A. ...	B	August, 1922
5944114	Sergt. Hall, T. C.	A	November, 1922
5944124	Cpl. Payne, H.	C	November, 1922
5944105	C.S.M. Poulter, W. F. ...	A	November, 1922
5944127	Pte. Lightfoot, W. C. ...	A	May, 1923
5944256	Cpl. Cox, C.	D	May, 1923
5944850	C.S.M. Cox, J.	D	May, 1923
5944271	Sergt.-Dr. Lovell, H. ...	A	August, 1923
5944774	Sergt.-Tailor Lumbis, A. G.	A	August, 1923
5944220	Sergt. Swales, F.	C	August, 1923
5944169	Sergt. Martin, B.	A	June, 1924

Digitized by Google

Territorial Efficiency Medal—continued.

5944170	Bandmr. Goodger, W. ...	...	C	Clasp to T.E. Medal awarded in 1909 (A.O. 354, Sept., 1924)
5944113	C.Q.M.S. Field, A. E.	...	A	Clasp to T.E. Medal awarded in 1917 (A.O. 354, Sept., 1924)
5944459	Pte. Barratt, J. E. ...	...	A	Clasp to T. E.Medal awarded in 1913 (A.O., December, 1926)
Lt. & Q.M.	Milton, A., M.C., D.C.M.			Clasp to T.E. Medal awarded in 1918 (A.O., February, 1927)
5944257	Pte. Clements, W. A.	...	D	March, 1928
5944406	Sergt. Peacock, F. ...	...	B	November, 1928
5944254	Sergt. Ray, G. T. ...	...	D	November, 1928
5944729	Pte. Richards, J. H.	...	A	November, 1928
5944163	Sergt. Summerlin, C.	...	C	March, 1929
5944280	C.Q.M.S. Swales, H. A.	...	C	March, 1929

APPENDIX XII

OFFICERS OF THE BATTALION. (BY SENIORITY.)

1ST JANUARY 1930

The date is that of promotion or appointment to the rank shown

Honorary Colonel: Colonel Spenser Jackson, T.D., D.L. 7–2–12

Lieut.-Colonel C. H. Miskin, M.C. ...	20–3–28 ...	Commanding Officer
Major C. A. F. Wingfield	22–4–28 ...	2nd in Command
Capt. G. W. Miskin	23–8–24 ...	O.C., D Company
Capt. W. H. Ridgewell, M.B.E. ...	11–7–25 ...	O.C., C Company
Capt. A. Waldren	22–4–28 ...	Signal Officer
Capt. R. D. P. Yates	1–6–29 ...	O.C., B Company
Capt. Hon. L. O. Russell	2–6–29 ...	O.C., A Company
Lieut. H. H. Revill, M.C.	6–11–26 ...	D Company
Lieut. S. T. Smith	8–5–27 ...	Machine Gun Platoon
Lieut. J. R. Harper	6–8–29 ...	A Company
Lieut. C. B. Blinco	6–11–29 ...	D Company
2nd-Lieut. G. N. Crowther	8–4–27 ...	Machine Gun Platoon
2nd-Lieut. W. T. Lane	28–6–27 ...	C Company
2nd-Lieut. Hon. I. Lawson Johnson ...	30–3–28 ...	Transport Officer
2nd-Lieut. J. MacCunn	1–6–29 ...	B Company
2nd-Lieut. R. F. Turner	4–12–29 ...	C Company

Adjutant: Capt. G. A. Anstee, M.C. 1–3–25

Quartermaster: Lieut. and Q.M., A. Milton, M.C., D.C.M. 10–12–26

Medical Officer: Capt. W. W. McNaught, M.C., M.B., R.A.M.C. 30–3–18

Chaplain: Rev. L. W. Wright, C.F. 25–8–28

APPENDIX XIII

ORGANISATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF THE BATTALION.

1ST JANUARY 1930

BATTALION HEADQUARTERS.—The Drill Hall, The Lane, Ashburnham Road, Bedford

HEADQUARTER COMPANY.—The Drill Hall, The Lane, Ashburnham Road, Bedford

A COMPANY.—The Drill Hall, The Lane, Ashburnham Road, Bedford

* B COMPANY.—The Drill Hall, Ampthill

C COMPANY.—Territorial Headquarters, Old Bedford Road, Luton

D COMPANY.—*Company H.Q. and Half Company*, The Drill Hall, Victoria Street, Dunstable

Half Company, The Drill Hall, West Street, Leighton Buzzard

* MACHINE GUN PLATOON.—Ivel Bury, Shortmead Street, Biggleswade

* As from April 1930, "B" Company will become the Machine Gun Company and will absorb the Machine Gun Platoon at that date.

Digitized by Google

APPENDIX XIV

ANNUAL TRAININGS SINCE THE WAR

Venue	*Date*
Gt. Yarmouth, Norfolk	August 1920
Eastbourne, Sussex	August 1921
Cardington, Bedfordshire	August 1922
Swingate Camp, Dover, Kent	August 1923
Swingate Camp, Dover, Kent	August 1924
Bulford, Salisbury Plain (for Manœuvres)	September 1925
Swingate Camp, Dover, Kent	August 1926
West Runton, near Sheringham, Norfolk	August 1927
Middlewick Camp, Colchester, Essex	August 1928
Arundel Park, Arundel, Sussex	August 1929

Digitized by Google

INDEX

Abasan el Kebir, 149
Abu el Ela Station, 126
Acre, 143
Adey, The Rev. F. W., 10
Adkin, Henry, 8
Ajalon, Valley of, 210
Alameda, The, 254
Alaunia, S.S., 120, 122
Aleppo, 143, 242
Alexander the Great, 146
" Alfred," 205
Ali Muntar Ridge, 150, 151, 152, 153, 158, 159, 162, 208
" Allah-en-Nebi," 146
Allen, Pte. F., 26
Allenby, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., D.C.L., LL.D., Field-Marshal the Viscount, 123, 146, 164, 165, 167, 183, 188, 189, 209, 210, 223, 225, 234, 236, 243
Alston, Alexander, 41, 43
Amiens, Peace of, 2
Amman, 223, 225
Ampthill, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., Col. The Rt. Hon. Lord, 258
Anafarta, 89, 92, 94, 110
Anderson, Pte. H., 26
Anderson, Pte. J., 26
Andreini, Capt. E.V., 48, 49, 52, 53, 55, 61, 102
Andrews, M.M., Pte. F., 221
Anstee, M.C., Capt. G. A., 274
Anzac, 83, 85, 87, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 117, 152, 244, 246, 257
Archer-Smith, Lt. E., 75
Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, 37
Armistice, The, 245
Armstrong, M.C., Lt.-Col. H. S., 139, 170, 171, 180, 183
Army Corps :—
  Australian and New Zealand, 112, 114
  Desert Mounted, 166, 206, 207, 209, 237
  20th, 166, 188, 207, 209, 223, 237, 238, 241
  21st, 166, 188, 189, 206, 209, 210, 223, 236, 237, 238, 239, 241
Army Order, 269, (1919), 230
Arras, 164
Arsuf, 143, 235, 238
Artillery :—
  A Battery, H.A.C., 136
  Argyll Mountain Battery, 96
  15th Heavy Battery, 96
  21st Corps Heavy, 237
  54th Divisional, 168
  58th Field Battery, 96
  162nd Inf. Brigade, L.T.M. Battery, 181
Artisan Corps, 19
Ashpole, Pte., 131, 132
Ashridge Park Camp, 44, 45, 46
" Asiatic Annie," 114
Atawineh Works, 161, 187
Athelstan, 67
Athos, Mount, 114
Attestation of Bedford Corps, First, 9
Australian Infantry :—
  11th Bn., 87
Bab el Azab, 124
Baha Works, 187
Baker, Capt. C. T., 96, 101, 257
Baker, The Rev. W. W. C., 42, 258
Bald Hill, 223
Ball, D.C.M., Cpl. A. H., 221
Ball, Pte., 255
Ballance, Lt. F. W., 101
Baluchistan Post, 130
Banala Hill, 212
Band, Divisional, 135, 136
Barford, Murray, 258
Barford, 2nd-Lt. L. I., 270
Barker, Dr., 5
Barrage Tables, 194
Barrow, G.C.B., K.C.M.G., Major-Gen. Sir Geo. de S., 166
Bass, Lt. R. E., 139
Bassett, Major, 78
Batten, Capt. J. K., 69
Battle Honours, 25, 42, 246, 257
Baxter, Hedley, 26, 27
Beach Road, 205
Bear's Rail Camp, 75
Beatrice, H.R.H. Princess, 254
Beauford, H. W., 7
Bedford Corps, 6, 8, 9
Bedford, Ninth Duke of, 6, 7, 11, 13, 15, 19, 21, 274
Bedford, K.G., K.B.E., Duke of, 254, 258
Bedfordshire Regt., The :—
  1st Bn., 23, 60, 77
  2nd Bn., 23, 24, 26, 33, 37, 247
  4th Bn. (Special Reserve), 129
  1st (Herts) V.B., 23, 29, 34, 42
  2nd (Herts) V.B., 23, 24, 26, 34
  3rd V.B., 23, 24, 26, 34, 37, 38, 41, 247, 263
  4th (Hunts) V.B., 23, 38
  5th Bn. (T.F.), 1, 23, 25, 38, 40, 41, 42, 44, 47, 53, 63, 66, 68, 69, 72, 75, 76, 78, 80, 81, 84, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 98, 99, 102, 107, 108, 120, 122, 128, 132, 135, 139, 143, 144, 149, 151, 153, 154, 155, 157, 159, 160, 162, 163, 166, 167, 169, 170, 178, 183, 188, 191, 194, 200, 203, 206, 207, 216, 218, 219, 220, 223, 225, 227, 230, 233, 234, 237, 238, 241, 245, 246, 247, 250, 256, 272
  2/5th Bn., 60, 63, 68, 69, 70, 72, 74, 75, 117
  3/5th Bn., 63, 74, 75, 76, 78
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regt., The, 250, 254
  1st Bn., 23
  2nd Bn., 271, 272
  5th Bn. (T.A.), 1, 10, 251, 254, 256, 257, 261, 265, 270
  5th Bn. (Defence Force), 251, 254
Bedfordshire Volunteer Rifles :—
  1st Administrative Bn., 11, 12, 13, 15, 18, 22, 23, 24, 38, 78, 257
Bedford Modern School O.T.C., 42
Bedford School O.T.C., 42
Bedfordshire Territorial Comforts Committee, 79, 139

Digitized by Google

Bedfordshire Territorial Force Association, 38, 39, 48, 49, 58, 258
Bedfordshire Times, The, 6
Bedouins, 133
Beersheba, 142, 145, 146, 147, 157, 165, 166, 167, 184, 185, 187, 188, 189, 206, 207, 236, 238
Beirut, 242, 243, 244, 245
Beisan, 235
Beit Nabala, 211, 229
Belah, 204
Bell, D.C.M., A/C.Q.M.S. R., 107
Benning, Lt., 22
Benning, C. C. S., 258
Berkshire Regt.:—
2nd Bn., 203
Bersaglieri, The, 237
Big Salt Lake, 112
Bikanir Camel Corps, 128
Birdwood, Bart., G.C.B., G.C.M.G., K.C.S.I., C.I.E., D.S.O., LL.D., Gen. Sir Wm. R., 94
Bir el Abd, 144
Bir el Giddi, 128
Bir el Mazar, 134
Bir el Tawal, 126, 128
Blee, Pte. J. E., 27
Bletso, Lord St. John of, 258
Bloemfontein, 28, 31, 34, 36, 37
Bodger, J. E., 19
Bowery, Pte. C., 26
Boyle, Gen., 76
Brabant's Horse, 32
Bradley, Pte. A. V., 26
Braemar Castle, S.S., 81, 83, 85, 88, 90, 91, 93, 120, 122
Braithwaite, Lt. Arthur, 26, 36
Brawn, Lce.-Cpl., 254
Brereton, Lt. L. L., 163
Brigades:—
Bedfordshire Volunteer Infantry, 24, 26, 37, 263
Camel, 159, 206, 207
French, The, 238
Imperial Corps, 166
Imperial Service (Cavalry), 166, 210
New Zealand Mounted, 152
5th Australian Light Horse Mounted, 152, 188, 237, 239
7th Mounted, 166
20th Indian Infantry, 166
30th Infantry, 96
31st Infantry, 96
69th Infantry, 73
155th Infantry, 162
156th Infantry, 189
158th Infantry, 207
161st Infantry, 152, 190, 198, 239
162nd Infantry, 40, 44, 68, 81, 96, 101, 110, 132, 144, 177, 188, 191, 212, 234, 256, 261, 263, 264, 268
163rd Infantry, 161, 190
Brighten, C.M.G., D.S.O., T.D., Lt.-Col. E. W., 25, 26, 37, 45, 60, 65, 76, 81, 91, 96, 104, 120, 124, 128, 129, 130, 139, 178, 179, 183, 184, 191, 192, 193, 195, 198, 202, 205, 208, 216, 230, 240, 243, 247, 274
Brighten, Lt. R., 101
Brittain, Pte. A., 26
Brooks, Capt. John Hatfield, 11, 17, 19, 20
Brown, C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O., T.D., Col. John, 162, 263
Brown, Sergt. P., 230
Brown and Brighten, Messrs., 25
Browning, H., 66
Brownlow, Earl, 46
Bruce, Gen., 33
Bryant, D.C.M., Pte. H., 103
Buck, 2nd-Lt. C. F., 170
Bulfin, K.C.B., C.V.O., LL.D., Lt.-Gen. Sir Edward S., 166, 189, 237
Bulgar Bluff, 118
Bunker, Cr.-Sergt.-Instr., 69, 72
Bureid Ridge Raid, The, 222, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 237
Burgess, M.M., Sergt. F., 201
Burley, Pte., 255
Burridge, Henry, 36
Bury St. Edmunds, 52, 53, 54, 62, 63
Butler, T.D., Lt.-Col. F. N., 25, 42, 60, 77, 274

Cambridgeshire Regt.:—
1st Bn., 44, 62
Cameron Highlanders, 44
Cape Town, 28, 38
Carburton Camp, 74
Cardington Aerodrome, 252, 253, 255, 256
Carmel, Mount, 243
Carmel Range, 143
Carruthers, Lt., 22, 26
Cat House, 226
Cavan, K.P., G.C.B., G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O., K.C.B., G.B.E., Gen. the Earl of, 255, 256, 270
Cawdor Castle, S.S., 25, 37
Chanak, Fort, 114
Chandler, D.C.M., M.M., C.S.M. J. J., 221
Chapman, The Rev. A. E., 67
Chaundler, M.C., Lt. P., 254
Chauval, Gen., 164, 166
Chaytor, Gen., 164
"Cherry Pickers," The, 250
Chetwode, Bart., K.C.B., K.C.M.G., D.S.O., Lt.-Gen. Sir Phillip W., 141, 142, 143, 149, 152, 164, 165, 166, 206, 263
Chirnside, M.C., Major W. S., 46, 47, 77, 81, 101, 107
Chocolate Hill, 111, 117
Church, M.C., Capt., 124
Cistern Hill, 213
Citadel, The, 124
Clark, Capt. R. O., 250
Clements, Gen., 30, 31, 33
Clifford, M.M., Sergt. E. G., 187
Clipstone, Camp, 74
Clutton, T.D., Lt.-Col. J., 250, 251, 253, 254, 256, 257, 258, 274
Clutton, Mrs., 255
Coal Strike, The, 251
Coastal Sector, Gaza, 185
Coate, 2nd-Lieut., 183
Cochlin, Ensign, 18
Coleman, Pte., 254
Collet, 2nd-Lt. H., 34
Colours, The, 3, 23, 41, 42, 43, 99, 254, 257, 270, 271
Comforts Fund, The, 79, 139
Companies:—
3rd V.B. Bedfordshire Regt.:—
No. 1 Active Service Coy., 27, 28, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, 66
No. 2 Active Service Coy., 34, 36, 37
No. 3 Active Service Coy., 37, 38, 247
5th Bn. Bedfordshire Regt. (T.F.):—
A Coy., 42, 45, 48, 61, 96, 97, 98, 100, 101, 107, 108, 161, 187, 203, 208, 211, 212, 221, 224, 229, 240, 241, 245
B Coy., 42, 48, 61, 96, 97, 98, 107, 108, 132, 134, 161, 208, 211, 212, 217, 241, 245

Digitized by Google

Companies (continued):—
D Coy., 43, 48, 61, 97, 98, 102, 132, 133, 134, 161, 162, 187, 208, 211, 212, 213, 221, 240, 245
E Coy., 43, 48, 61
F Coy., 43, 48, 61
G Coy., 43, 48, 61
H Coy., 43, 48, 61
Y Coy., 245
Z Coy., 245
5th Bn. Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regt. (T.A.):—
A Coy., 255, 256, 259, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 269
B Coy., 255, 257, 259, 262, 264, 265, 268
C Coy., 255, 257, 259, 262, 265, 266
D Coy., 255, 257, 259, 262, 265, 266, 268
Company Battle Flags, 256, 258
Connaught and Strathearn, K.G., K.T., K.P., G.C.B., G.C.S.I., G.C.M.G., G.C.I.E., G.C.V.O., G.B.E., V.D., Field-Marshal H.R.H. the Duke of, 74, 220, 221
Conquest, Pte. A., 27
Cook, Sig., 104
Coombs, Lt.-Col. R. G., 258
Cooper-Cooper, Major, 7, 10, 12
Cooper-Cooper, Miss, 12
Corner, M.C., Capt. F., 251, 262
Costin's Field, 65
Cover Alley, 174
Cowper, Earl, 18, 21
Crawley, Capt. John Sambrook, 9, 10, 18
Crawley, Sergt. R., 25
Creagh, V.C., Gen. Sir O'Moore, 41
Cricket Redoubt, 196, 199, 200
Cronin, Lt. H. W., 170, 208, 216
Crosbie, Capt. Wm., 8, 9, 12
Cross Cut, 174, 181, 182
Crowborough, 74, 76
"Crystal Palace," The, 252
Ctesiphon, 121
Cully, Cpl., 254
Cumberland, Capt. Brian, 97, 100, 101, 108, 257
Cunningham, M.C., R.A.M.C., Capt., 177
Cust, Lt.-Col., 19

Daily Express Cheery Fund, 79
Daily News, The, 139
Daily Telegraph, The, 139
Dallas, Gen., 152, 153
Damanhur, 123
Damascus, 143, 236, 248
Damon, Lt., 201, 202
Dann, D.S.O., Lt.-Col. W. R. H., 26
Darb el Haj, 128
Dardanelles, 77, 85, 118
Darlington, 73, 74
Darlow, Pte., 255
Day, Lt. C. R., 101
Day, Pte. H., 26
Dayrell, Major G. M. de L., 135, 139
Decorations during War, 247
Defence Force, The, 251, 254, 255
Deir el Belah, 149, 158, 188
Deir Sineid, 218
Deir Tureif, 212, 213
Denne, 6
Dennis, 2nd-Lt. E. E., 186, 187
Denniss, Pte. G., 26
Deraa, 235
Desert Columns, 149, 152, 159, 188
"Die Hards," The, 250
Divisions:—
Anzac, 161, 164, 166, 206, 210, 223
Australian Mounted, 166, 206, 237
Divisions (continued):—
Eastern Mounted, 68
Imperial Mounted, 161
Yeomanry Mounted, 166, 206, 210
3rd (Lahore), 237, 239, 241
4th Cavalry, 237
5th Cavalry, 237, 239, 242, 243
7th (Meerut), 226, 237, 238, 242
10th, 95, 96, 166, 238
11th, 110
29th, 105, 110, 111
52nd, 110, 149, 160, 161, 162, 163, 166, 189, 208, 209, 210
53rd, 87, 88, 89, 91, 92, 110, 149, 151, 152, 153, 154, 158, 159, 162, 166, 206, 207, 219, 238, 241
54th, 48, 68, 87, 88, 89, 92, 93, 94, 96, 110, 120, 123, 129, 131, 132, 144, 149, 152, 159, 160, 161, 163, 166, 168, 178, 188, 189, 191, 193, 206, 208, 210, 216, 226, 227, 228, 234, 237, 238, 239, 245, 246, 247, 253
60th, 166, 167, 207, 219, 223, 237, 238, 239
69th, 68, 73
74th, 120, 166
75th, 166, 209, 210, 211, 225, 238, 239
Djemal Pasha, 163
Dobell, K.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., Lt.-Gen. Sir Chas. M., 149, 152, 162, 163, 164
Dorab es Sultania, 143
Dorset House, 160
Doughty, Pte. H., 27
Douglas, 2nd-Lt. C. V., 75
Dug Out Alley, 172, 175
Duncan, 2nd-Lt. S., 231
Dunham, Pte. F., 26, 29
Dunstable and Houghton Volunteer Coys., 3

Edward VII, H.M. King, 24, 249
Edwards, Councillor B. C., 67
El Afule, 235, 238
El Arish, 134, 141, 143, 144, 145, 174
El Dhaheriye, 206
El Kahirah, S.S., 119
El Kalaa, 124
El Magruntein, 142
El Shatt, 131, 135, 137
Elandsfontein, 37
Ellengar, H.M.T., 245
Esdraelon, 143, 235
Esdud, 210, 211
Es Sire Ridge, 159, 160
Essex Regt.:—
5th Bn., 229, 237
6th Bn., 131
7th Bn., 81
Et Tireh, 238, 239
Evans, Hon. Asst. Surgeon, 9, 10
Evans, M.P., Sir Laming Worthington, 270
Exning, 71, 72

Fanshawe, The Rev. F., 6
Farr, Hon. Asst. Surgeon F., 11
Fathers, Pte. H. C., 26
Feisal, The Emir, 237
Festival Harmonieux, 136
Field, C.Q.M.S. A. E., 270
Field, Pte. G., 36, 37
Findlay's Farm, 34
Finlay, Capt., 32
First Line Reinforcements, 86, 97, 108
Fisher's Orchard, 190
Fisher's Wood, 186
Fitzpatrick, The Rev. R. W., 5, 6

Digitized by Google

" Fore and Aft," The, 250
Forrest, M.B.E., T.D., Major R., 97, 102, 250, 257, 274
Foster, The Rev. A. J., 27
Fox, Pte., 134
Foxhound, H.M.S., 96
Freemasons of Bury St. Edmunds, 63
Fuller, Lt. H. F., 208, 218
Fyrds, 1

Galilee, Sea of, 143
Gallipoli, 25, 72, 92, 93, 106, 119, 121, 122, 126, 152, 244, 246
Garcia, Lt.-Col. Clive, 178
Gath, 143
Gaza, 142, 143, 145, 146, 148, 153, 166, 188, 189, 246
Gaza, First Battle of, 142, 145, 146, 148, 149, 150, 152, 154, 157, 159, 258
Gaza, Second Battle of, 157, 158, 159, 163, 164, 167, 246, 258
Gaza, Third Battle of, 136, 184, 185, 187, 188, 189, 199, 203, 205, 206, 208, 209, 236, 241, 246, 258
Gelder, Pte. C. W., 90
German Spies, 156, 184
Ghizeh, 124
Gibraltar-Rafa-Trench-Cricket Redoubt, 190
Gilbert, Pte. W., 26
Gilder, Sergt., 75
Gillam, Capt. V. A., 42
" Glass House," The, 252
Gloucestershire Regt., 23
Gloucester, Robert Duke of, 67
Godley, Gen. Sir Alexander, 263
Gooderham, M.C., 2nd-Lt. F., 226, 227
Goodger, Bandmaster W., 135, 136, 270
Goodman, Pte. A. J., 26
Graham, Cpl. S. V., 253
Grampus, H.M.S., 96
Grantham, Barony of, 6
Greek, S.S., 28
Green, D.S.O., V.D., Lt.-Col. A. Lingard, 26, 27, 30, 33, 35, 36, 274
Green, V.D., Lt.-Col. E. R., 24, 35, 274
Green, Ensign Fredk. Wm., 13
Green, Lt. H. H., 19
Green, Lt.-Col. John Thos., 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 13, 18, 21, 22, 24, 274
Green Hill, 152
Gresham, Ensign Fredk., 13
Grey, Earl de, 4, 6, 7, 8
Gun Hill, 191, 199, 200, 246
Gurkha Post, 130
Gurkha Regt., 3/3rd Bn., 188
Gurney, 2nd-Lt. F. J. W., 170, 186
Gwyn, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., Col. C. W., 253
Gwyn St. Drill Hall, 46, 255

Haasbruck, 32, 34
Haditheh, 211
Haifa, 237, 238, 242, 243
Halfpenny, M.M., Pte. A., 221
Hall, Pte. E. H., 26
Halls, The Rev. G. F., 27
Halton Camp, 76
Hamilton, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., D.S.O., T.D., S.M., Gen. Sir Ian, 25, 87, 88, 93, 110, 120
Hampden, C.B., C.M.G., A.D.C., Col. Lord, 253, 257
Hampshire Regt., 216
Hanmer, Col., 7
Haram Ridge, 224
Hare, Capt. J. F., 237
Hare, Major-Gen. Sir S. W., 131, 178, 189, 190, 237, 253
Hareira, 159, 161, 187, 188, 208
Harrington, Lt. F. J., 43
Harris, Capt., 22
Harrogate, 73
Harter, D.S.O., M.C., Major J. F., 253
Harvey, D.S.O., Lt.-Col. John, 258
Hassan Garden, 202
Hassan Pimple, 203, 205
Hawkins, Sergt. J., 25
Hay, Capt. S., 44
" Haystacks," The, 267, 268
Hebron Road, 206
Hedjaz, King of, 134, 135
Hedjaz Railway, 237
Helles, Cape, 85, 111
Helmieh Camp, 245
Henton, Pte. W., 26
Hereford Ridge Sector, 185, 187, 258
Hertfordshire Regt.:—
1st Bn., 44, 62, 63, 77, 266
Hertfordshire Volunteer Rifles:—
1st Administrative Bn., 18, 19
2nd Administrative Bn., 18, 19
Hill, Lt., 43
Hill, Major J. E., 100, 102, 103
Hill 70, 111
Hill 489, 223
Hills, Capt. A. J., 25
Hobbs, M.C., Capt. F. B., 86, 109, 135, 170, 187, 211, 213, 214, 215, 217, 221
Hobbs, Lt. G. N., 69
Hogge, Lt. Fredk., 13
Holy City, The, 146, 219
Holy Family, The, 124
Holy Land, The, 138, 184
Home Defence Army, 74
Honourable Artillery Company, The:—
A Battery, 136
Hoopstad, 37
Hope, 2nd-Lt. A., 230, 231, 232, 233
Hopkins, Cpl., 37
Horne, G.C.B., K.C.M.G., A.D.C., D.C.L., LL.D., Gen. the Lord, 122, 253, 254, 259
Horus, 123
Howard, Jas., 6, 9
Howard, John, 4, 8, 257
Huj, 158
Hulett, Pte. T., 26
Hunter, Lt. L. J., 101, 218
Huquet, Major le, 251, 253, 274
Hurst, Alderman, 5, 6
Hussein, King, 135
Hut Post, 34

Ibbottson, Lt.-Col., 19
Ibrahim, 244
Imbros, 90, 91
Inglefield, Major-Gen., 91, 95
Inseirat, 149, 151, 155, 159
Iraq Army, 183
Ismail Oglu Tepe, 94, 110
Izzard, Pte. F., 26

Jackson, Lt. Thos. Jobson, 8, 9, 10
Jackson, T.D., D.L., Col. Spenser, 38, 42, 258, 274
Jaffa, 210, 212
Jaffa-Jerusalem Road, 210, 211, 222
Jaffa-Selmah Road, 220, 222
James, M.C., Major C. R., 101, 127, 160, 184, 218, 220, 227, 240
Jarvis, D.S.O., D.L., Lt.-Col. Talbot, 258
Jebalieh, 208, 211

Digitized by Google

Jedda, 135
Jekyll, Capt. Ed., 22
Jemmameh, 148
Jericho, 222, 223, 225
Jerusalem, 123, 145, 157, 163, 210, 212, 218
Jerusalem, Mayor of, 219
Jiljulian Bridge, 226
Johnston, Lt. Chas., 19
Jones, D.S.O., M.C., Capt., 254
Jones, Sergt. C. F., 26
Jones, H. J., 7
Jordan, The, 143, 225
Jordan Valley, The, 223, 225, 235, 238
Joy, Pte. M. J., 26
Judea, 210, 223
Judean Hills, 146, 148, 210

Kantara, 141, 144, 245
Karrefontein, 29
Kassim Wood, 237, 240
Kauwukah, 165
Kefrana, 216, 217
Kefr Dikerin, 221
Kefr Kassim, 226, 237, 238, 239, 241, 247
Kefr Um el Bureid, 231
Kelly-Kenny, Gen., 33
Kemp, Pte. C. J., 26
Kempson, Dr. C. E., 84
Khamsin, The, 167, 207
Khan Yunus, 145, 149
Khirbet el Bir, 159
Khirbet Sihan, 159
Kiddle, Lt. E., 45, 56, 57
Kidney Hill, 99, 101, 103, 104
Killinghall Moor, 73
Kilo 18, 144
King, Cpl. E., 104, 105, 108, 113
King, H.M. The, 75, 249, 250
Kipling, Rudyard, 29
Kiretch Tepe Sirt, 92, 95, 110
Kitchener, Field-Marshal Lord, 122
Kitchener, Pte. C. J., 27
Kressenstein, Gen. Kress von, 148, 157, 158, 163
Kroonstadt, 31
Kubri, 128, 130, 141
Kurd Hill, 154, 160
Kuryet el Enab, 211
Kut, 121

Ladder of Tyre, The, 242
Lala Baba, 111, 112
Lamb, Lt. G. M., 262
Lathom, M.C., Major F. W. F., 70, 73
Leighton Buzzard Corps, 7, 10
Lemnos, 86, 90
Lester, Ensign Wm. Henry, 19
Lightfoot, Pte. G., 27
Limbert, Lt. R. W., 76, 79
Lindley, 30
Lindsell, Lt.-Col. Robert Henry, 13
Lisle, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., D.S.O., Gen. Sir H. de Beauvoir de, 96, 110
Lismore Castle, S.S., 37
Little Bitter Lake, 126, 131
Lloyd, Major, 32
London Gazette, The, 107
London Regt., The :—
  10th Bn., 62 132, 204, 212, 213, 220, 226, 227
  11th Bn., 62, 191, 199, 200, 205, 223, 229, 246
Lone Pine, 88
Long Melford, 54, 55
Lovedale, 34
Lowestoft, 22
Ludd, 210, 211, 212, 215, 219
Luton News, The, 90
Luton Town Council, 76
Lydekker, Lt. C. R., 101

McAndrew, Gen., 242
McBride, R.A.M.C. (T.F.), Major J. B., 57
Machine Gun Coy., 162nd Divisional, 168
Machine Gun Corps, 95
Magdhaba, 141, 142, 149
Maier, M.C., Capt. E. T., 108, 132, 134, 170 184, 216
Malta, 83, 85, 119
Manchester Militia, 32
Manchester Regt., 1st Bn., 229
Mander, Capt. A. J., 186, 208, 250
Mansurah Ridge, 152, 153, 154, 155, 160
Marine View, 195, 196
Marks, W. W., 258
Marlow, M.M., Sergt. C., 221
Mary, H.R.H. Princess, 75
Masberry Hill, 7
Maxwell, Gen. Sir J., 133
Mayers, M.C., 2nd-Lt. W. H., 228
Meakin, Capt. W. K., 97, 101, 257
Mecca, 128
Mehemet Ali Mosque, The, 124
Mehemet Ali, Prince, 124
Mehemet Ali, Sultan, 124
Meeks, Pte., 134
Mejdel Yaba, 221, 224, 238, 239, 246
Mena Camp, 123, 124, 126
Mendham, R.S.M. E., 60, 75
Mercer, C.M.G., Col. E. G., 70, 73
Merioneth Redoubt, 187
Messudieh Junction, 235, 241
Metcalfe, D.S.O., Major C. H. F., 60
Methuen, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O., LL.D., Field-Marshal the Lord, 42, 34
Meyer's Kop, 31
Mezerieh, 223
Mildenhall, 71
Miller, Major, 251, 253
Milton, M.C., D.C.M., Lt. and Q.M. A., 103, 156, 171, 204, 208, 215, 221, 251, 270
Miskin, M.C., Lt.-Col. C. H., 53, 55, 56, 80, 123, 124, 128, 171, 176, 254, 272, 274
Miskin, Capt. G. W., 262
Mohamdiya, 144
Moppers Up, 200
Morgan, Capt. Francis Fredk. Richard Mansell, 14, 21
Moseley, Pte. W. W., 27
Mouse, Lt. C. A., 270
Mousehold Heath, 65
" Mud Farm," 264
Mudge, Brig.-Gen., 111, 132, 144, 153, 177, 191
Mudros, 86, 88, 91, 119
Mugheir, 235
Mulebbis, 219, 222, 246
" Mulvaney, Pte.," 29
Muniment Room, Bedford, 4, 9, 15
Munson, Sergt.-Instr. H., 63
Murray, Gen. Sir Archibald, 142, 143, 147, 149, 151, 157, 164, 165
Myers, Pte., 254

Naauwpoort Nek, 31
Nabala Hill, 215, 229
Nablus, 235, 238, 241
Nahr el Falik, 238

Digitized by Google

Napoleon, 143, 144, 146
Nash, H. J., 5, 6
Nassir's Arabs, 242
Nebi Musa, 223
Needham, V.C., Pte. S., 232, 234
New, Lt. L. P., 131, 139
Newcombe, Col., 206
Newmarket, 72, 73
Nichols, W., 258
Nicholas, Capt. F. W. H., 131
Nile, The, 143, 145
No Man's Land, 165, 171, 192, 196
Norfolk Regt. :—
  1/4th Bn., 185, 216
  5th Bn., 226
Norris, Capt. G. J., 75
Norwich, 64, 65
Northampton Regt :—
  4th Bn., 44, 46, 132, 162, 191, 194, 200, 204, 205, 220, 224, 240
  4th V.B., 42

Officers' Mess Meeting, 95
Old Pilgrim Road, 132, 133
" Oldham Post, Mayor of," 139
Olive Hill, 216
Oliver, Capt., 3
Olivier, Commandant, 31, 32, 33
One Tree Gulley, 111, 112
Oriental Bazaar, The, 124, 125
Orlebar, Capt. R., 254
Orlebar, Lt.-Col. R. R. B., 74, 76, 78, 113, 258
Orr, Capt. G. P. L., 75
Osborn, Bart., Sir A. K. B., 78
Osborn, Bart., Sir George, 7, 11
Otter, 2nd-Lt. R. E., 186
Outpost Hill, 158, 162, 188
Owens, Major F., 239

Pache, Cpl., 255
Paget, G.C.B., K.C.V.O., Gen. the Rt. Hon. Sir A. H., 31
Palmerston, Lord, 3
Parker, 2nd-Lt., 139
Patchoana, 34
Payne, Pte. H., 26
Pearse, T. W., 6
Pearson, Sir C. Arthur, 75
" Ped-Rails," 143
Pelusium Siding, 144
Pennycock, M.M., Pte. T., 228
Perkins, C.Q.M.S. S., 270
Phantom White Horse, The, 115
Phillips, Pte. A. F., 20
Phillips, Pte. Charles, 20
Phillips, Sergt. Edward, 20
Phillips, 2nd-Lt. E. A., 187, 203
Phillips, Pte. G. T., 20
Phillips, Pte. S. T., 20
Phillips, William, 20
Phillips, Capt. William, 20, 21
Philistia, 143, 210
Piggott, Pte. W., 37
Pilcher, C.B., Col. 35
Pilgrims' Road, The, 128, 133
Pinacle Hill, 212
Pompey, 146
Port Said, 218
Port Tewfik, 131, 135
Poulter, C.S.M., 267
P.R.I.'s box, 156
Pretender, The Young, 3
Primett, Councillor W. J., 67
Prinsloo, Gen., 31
Prisoner of War Camps, 134
Promised Land, The, 145, 147, 208
" Prophet of the Lord," 145
Pryor, Capt. R. H., 197, 208
Punch, 83
Pyraminds, The, 123, 124

Queen's Regt., The, 111
Quenby, Pte. H. H., 26

R.A.M.C. :—
  1st (East Anglian) Field Ambulance, 79, 167, 169, 177, 178
  162nd Divisional, 168
Rafa, 141, 142, 146, 149, 151, 167
Rafa-Belah Ridge, 201
Rafat, 238, 239
Raid Orders, 171, 179
Raikes, 2nd-Lt. C. P. N., 34
Rainbow, Pte. V., 26
Ramleh, 210
Rawlins, Lt. E. L., 106, 131
Recruiting Committee, South Bedfordshire, 76
Red Hill, 155
Red Hound Battery, 4
Red House Wood, 226, 237
Relief Fund, H.R.H. The Prince of Wales's, 75
Review, The Great, 11
Rib Alley, 182
Richard the Lion-Hearted, 143
Ricketts, Lt. K. H., 250
Ridgwell, M.B.E., Capt. W. H., 262, 266, 267, 270
Rifle Brigade, The, 257
Ripon, Earl of, 6, 8
Rising, Lt. Derek, 101
Roberts, V.C., Field-Marshal Lord, 33
Robertson, Bart., G.C.B., G.C.M.G., K.C.V.O., D.S.O., D.C.L., LL.D., Field-Marshal Sir William, 76
Romani, 144
Romford, 49, 50, 51
Royal Engineers :—
  1st Bedfordshire Volunteer, 35
  54th Divisional, 42, 168
  54th Divisional Signals, 167, 178
  484th Field Coy., 167, 169, 176, 178
Royal Road, The, 143
Royal Scots, 33
Rudd, Pte. F., 26
Rudkin, Pte. E. T., 27
Russell, M.P., The Rt. Hon. Francis Hastings, 6, 7, 11, 13, 15, 19, 21, 274
Russell, O.B.E., Lt.-Col. The Hon. Victor, 69, 70, 73
Russell Rise, 115

Saladin, 143, 145
Salford, 131
" Salvage Corps," 221
Samson, 145, 146
Samson's Ridge, 158, 162
Sand Bag Ridge, 113, 118
Sanders, Gen. Liman von, 236, 237
Sanna's Post, 33, 36
Sap, The Left, 113
Sapsford, D.C.M., Sergt. S., 221
Sari Bair, 94
Saris, 211
Schneider Trophy, The, 113

Digitized by Google

Scottish Rifles (The Cameronians):—
7th Bn., 189, 190
8th Bn., 189, 190
Sea Post, 193, 196, 197, 198, 199, 201
Selmeh, 219, 222
Semakh, 235
Senekal, 28, 29
Sergeant, J., 5
Shadow Spur, 216
Shallufa, 126, 131
Sharon, 143
Sharpe, D.C.M., Sergt. A. T., 177, 221
Sharta, 151
Shaw, M.C., Lt. W. A., 170, 174, 208, 221
Shea, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., D.S.O., S.M., Gen. Sir John 219
Sheik Abbas Ridge, 150, 152, 154, 159, 160, 163
Sheik Abbas Sector, 172
Sheik Ajlin, 197, 198
Sheik Hassan, 189, 191, 193, 196, 200, 201, 202, 203, 205, 206, 208, 211, 246
Sheik Neban, 157
Sheik's Tomb, The, 202, 205
Shellal, 148, 188, 206
Sheria, 188, 206
Shoosmith, Lt. F. S., 97, 102, 103, 106, 108, 111
Shukhah, 212
Sidi Bishr, 122, 123
Sidon, 242
Sign, 54th Divisional, 167, 168, 246
Sihan Works, 187
Silk Alley, 174
Sinai Desert, 121, 126, 141, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147
Sitwell, Gen., 247
Sivri Wood, 240
Skinner, Mrs. Crawley Ross, 9
Sloan, M.C., Capt. F. A., 262, 270, 274
Smith, Pte. F. W., 26
Smith, 2nd-Lt. H. W. E., 183
Smith, Pte. J. H., 26
Smith, 2nd-Lt. R. H., 170, 171, 175, 215
Smith, Ensign Thomas, 10
Smith, W. W., 258
Smuts, Lt.-Gen. the Hon. J. C., 223
Smythe, M.C., Capt. B. W., 170, 171, 174, 250
Smythe, Capt. R. M., 86, 109
Southwold, 72
Sowden, 2nd-Lt. P. J., 187
Special Court, 10
Sphinx, The, 124
Sports, The Regimental, 139, 140, 254, 255
Springhaan, 33
Spurgeon, Lt. D. F. P., 230, 231
Squire, Thomas, 3
St. Albans, 66, 67, 80, 95
St. Andrew, S.S., 35
St. Leonards-on-Sea, 76, 78
Stay Alley, 175, 181
Stevens, C.B.E., Col. F. A. D., 254, 258
Stick Alley, 175
Stock, 35
Stopford, Gen., 94, 96, 110
Subket Post, 186
Suez Canal, 121, 122, 125, 126, 127, 130, 144, 246
Suffolk Regt., 1st/5th Bn., 216
Sulajik, 110
Sullings, The Rev. J., 116
Surafend, 229
Surrey Militia, 28
Suvla Bay, 87, 89, 90, 91, 99, 115, 256, 257
Sweet Water Canal, 130
Sword of Honour, 21
Sworder, Capt. Thomas, 20
Symons, 2nd-Lt. W. R., 231

Tabsor, 238, 239
Taitt, Lt. N., 131
Tank Redoubt, 159, 161
Tarif, 223
Tassel Corner, 174, 175
Tawal Abu Jerwal, 206
Taylor, T.D., Major J. Wellesley, 55, 69, 76, 250, 259
Tebby, Lce.-Cpl., 84
Tekke Tepe, 94
Tel el Amara, 154, 155
Tel el Khuweilfeh, 207
Tel esh Sadria, 157
Tel esh Sheria, 148
Thaba 'Nchu, 33, 34, 36
Three Bushes Hill, 225
Thurley, Sergt.-Cook, 215
Thynne, Lt. Francis John, 7, 11
Thynne, Capt. Oliver, 8
Tiller, Major, 148, 157
Timms, Sergt.-Instr. Luke, 34
Toddington Corps, 7, 12, 21
Tomb Spur, 200, 201, 202
Tompkins, Pte. F., 26
Toogood, Capt. H. S., 250
Tortoise Hill, 204
Transfluvia, East, 226
Trench, Capt. H. Chevenix, 254
Trethewy, Lt. A., 26, 28, 29, 36
Tul Keram, 238, 239, 241
Turkish Forces:—
Engineers, 106
Lines of Communication, 235
7th Army, 210, 218, 235, 238, 242
8th Army, 210, 235, 238, 242
79th Regt., 157
3rd Division, 157
16th Division, 157
53rd Division, 157
Turnley, T., 6
Turtle Hill, 203, 204, 205, 208

Um el Kelab, 167
Umbrella Hill, 167, 168, 169, 171, 173, 177, 179, 180, 183, 184, 185, 188, 189, 190, 196, 246

Valetta Harbour, 85
Valsch River, 30
Veasey, Lt., 29
Victoria Cross, The, 232, 234
Victoria, H.M. Queen, 10, 42
Vimy Ridge, 77
Volunteers, "Grey-Green," The, 41
Volunteer Training Corps, The, 41
Vyse, Lt. Edmund Waller, 10

Wadi Dhaheb, 226
Wadi el Haj, 128
Wadi el Mitla, 129
Wadi es Samieh, 238
Wadi Fara, 241
Wadi Ghuzze, 142, 146, 148, 150, 151, 153, 157, 160, 167
Wadi Haram, 232

Digitized by Google

Wadi Ika, 240
Wadi Ishkar, 226
Wadi Kanah, 241, 243
Wadi Malake, 210
Wadi Mayeh, 232, 233, 240
Wadi Nukabir, 157, 160
Wadi Rabah, 224, 232, 240
Wadi Sheikh Nuran, 148
Wales, H.R.H. The Prince of, 75, 129, 270, 272
Waller, D.C.M., R.S.M. C. F., 251, 255, 262
Walmer Castle, R.M.S., 38
War Cabinet, The, 142, 210, 223
Wardown Park, Luton, 66, 208
Waterton, Lt. J. E., 214
Watson, Capt., 262
Watt, 2nd-Lt. K. M., 185, 186
"Wazza," 136
Webb, Capt. R. L., 69
Webb, Pte. W., 36
Webster, Capt. J. M., 22
"Well of the Oath," The, 145
Welsh, M.M., Cpl. S., 227
Wenlock, Lord, 67
Wernher, K.C.V.O., Lt.-Col. Sir H. A., 262, 274
Whitbread, C.B., Samuel H., 66, 250
White, Pte. F. J., 26
Whitmarsh, Pte. A. J., 26
Whyley, Mark, 7
Wilhelma, 223, 226
Wilkin, Lt. H., 163, 170, 202, 208
Willis, Edward, 10
Winburg, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33
Windsor, 75
Wingfield, Capt. A. E., 254
Wingfield A. H., 258
Wingfield, Capt. C. A. F., 254, 262
Winton, Brig.-Gen. C. de., 40, 44, 81, 86, 96, 101, 120, 144
Woburn Corps, 21
Wodehouse, Lt. E. B., 186
Wolff, Major C. H., 129
Wolloscombe, Lt.-Col. T. S., 78
Wood, Lt., 135
Woodhouse, Lt. H. E., 97
Woods, H., 258
Woodward, The Rev. Lambert, 27
Wright, Pte. D., 26, 42
Wright, Lt. Huntley, 128
Wren, Pte. T., 26

Yaffa Hill, 217
Yarde, M.C., Capt. J. T., 101, 132, 133, 139, 153, 208, 217, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 240
Yarmouth, 73
Yates, Capt. R. D. Peel, 266
Yazur, 221
Yehudieh, 216, 217, 226
"Yellow Devils," The, 99, 100, 112, 141, 220, 232, 246, 272
Yeomanry:—
Bedfordshire, 42, 79
Berkshire, 210
Buckingham, 210
Dorsetshire, 139
Middlesex, 128
Warwickshire, 210
Wiltshire, 8
Worcestershire, 210
Yorkshire Hussars, 4
Yeomanry Hill, 32
Yid, 212
Younghusband, D.S.O., Lt.-Col. H., 46, 50, 60, 81, 100, 103, 113, 120
Yunis Redoubt, 200

Zand River, 30
Zeify Hill, 212, 213, 214, 215
Zetoun, 184

Printed for the Publishers by Simson & Co. Ltd., Hertford.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google